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I'll go anywhere, says Netanyahu

London may host Mid-East peace talks

FROM ANDREW PIERCE AND CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

TONY BLAIR is set to host an international conference in London next month in an attempt to break the stalemate in the Middle East peace process.

The surprise move was announced last night after the Prime Minister had spent 90 minutes in talks with the Israeli leader, Benjamin Netanyahu.

Mr Netanyahu welcomed Mr Blair, who is on the fourth leg of his Middle East tour, as a "friend of Israel" and announced: "I am prepared to go anywhere at any time, specifically in the next month, to any location — and possibly to London — to try to advance the process."

The declaration surprised his audience, but the plan has already been discussed with Washington, which raised no objections. The Palestine authority is also understood to welcome the idea as it believes these would be a huge benefit in holding talks on independent soil.

Proposals put forward by the Clinton Administration into the process have remained on the table for months, and it had been hoped that Mr Blair's tour — in his capacity as president of the European Union — would inject new momentum into the process.

Mr Blair said yesterday that the American proposals offered the best framework for peace, adding: "Peace can only happen if people want it to happen. The price is too great to let it slip." Asked if he would be willing to host a conference to discuss those proposals, he said: "I would be very happy if they were in London. That is entirely a matter for them."

His official spokesman said later: "The Prime Minister has offered it, but at the end of the day it will be for the Americans to decide."

Before the two Prime Ministers began their talks yesterday, Miguel Moratinos, the EU special envoy to the Middle East, said that the atmosphere was good with both sides looking to Mr Blair to try to break the stalemate because of his close links with President Clinton.

Mr Netanyahu also sounded hopeful, saying: "No one can gain from violence and all of us have lots to gain from peace." He was convinced that peace could be secured "sooner than we expect."

Mr Blair had arrived in Jerusalem after a five-hour visit to Jordan, where he had talks with King Hussein, who described the breakthrough in Northern Ireland as a good omen. "This is the time when we believe the peace process

has to be saved, otherwise we will be entering a very dark period," he said.

On arriving in Israel, Mr Blair visited the Holocaust memorial at Yad Vashem, and said: "Having realised the real depths of evil to which humanity sinks, now let us show the heights to which humanity can rise."

The Prime Minister's visit ran into a diplomatic minefield, however, when the mayor of Jerusalem announced that he would "rub the state dinner because Mr Blair had declined to meet him, Ehud Olmert, who is also a Likud Party member," the Knesset, said that after leaders, including Mr Blair, had met him, Mr Blair's refusal to meet a snub to Israel's sovereignty in Jerusalem.

But British officials rejected the setback as dismissed comparisons with the snub suffered by Robin Cook when Mr Netanyahu refused to have dinner with him. One said: "The mayor asked for an invitation to see the Prime Minister. The invitation was declined because there was not enough time in his schedule. As a result, the mayor withdrew from the dinner."

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Open branches for poor, banks urged

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

BANKS and building societies are being asked by the Government to use their huge cash reserves to open branches for the poor.

Frank Field, the Minister for Welfare Reform, has held a series of top-level meetings urging the main high street institutions to reverse the closure programmes of the past decade, which have left millions of people with no direct access to their banks. The number of branches of the biggest nine banks in the country has fallen from more than 14,000 to just over 10,000 since 1986.

If more branches were opened, the Department of Social Security believes it could save millions of pounds by paying benefits directly into bank accounts. Such transfers cost only a few pence, but only 25 per cent of the 23 million claimants receive their benefits this way. Two-thirds use order books, which enable them to get their money from the Post Office, and 9 per cent are sent giro cheques — which cost the DSS £1 each to administer.

A senior DSS source said that Mr Field hoped to make the banks and building societies act by persuasion without having to resort to legislation. Providing poorer people with access to bank accounts would not only make it easier for them to receive benefits, the source said, but also give them access to credit and make it simpler for them to be put on a payroll. It might help, too, to improve their financial literacy and money management skills.

"We are not yet in the situation of the United States where some financial institutions 'red-line' entire ghettos to areas in which they will not open branches, but it is true to say that a lot of people who could benefit from having a local bank or building society branch are deprived of them simply because they live in poor areas," the source said.

Having closed scores of branches and cut thousands of staff, many high street banks have huge surplus assets, which Mr Field believes should be used to expand their networks. NatWest has an estimated cash surplus of £225 million.

Continued on page 2, col 1

Continued on page 2, col 1



Juliette Binoche, the Oscar-winning actress, arriving for the Bafta awards last night

Naked ambition rewarded with four Baftas for The Full Monty

BY CAROL MIDGLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE most successful British box-office hit of all time, *The Full Monty*, led the way at a glittering Bafta ceremony last night, winning four awards. Its triumph made up for its failure to win a major award at last month's Oscars ceremony and was seen as a ringing endorsement of the British film industry.

Nil By Mouth, Gary Oldman's compelling portrait of an East End alcoholic and his battered wife, also picked up two awards — for the outstanding British film of the year and the best original screenplay.

Another British movie, *Mrs Brown*, about Queen Victoria's alleged romance with a manservant, was honoured with two awards. Dame Judi Dench, who played Queen Victoria, was judged to have given the best performance by an actress in a leading role, and the film also won the award for best costume design.

But *Titanic*, starring Kate Winslet, the British actress, failed to gain a single award despite its massive success at the Oscars.

The Full Monty, which has grossed more than £140 million worldwide, was given the best film award and the audience award for the most popular film of 1997.

Robert Carlyle won best performance by an actor in a leading role for his part in the film about a team of male strippers, while Tom Wilkinson won best performance in a supporting role.

Last night's Bafta ceremony — the fiftieth — marked a concerted effort by its organisers to rival the Oscars and boost British film. But torrential rain dampened the event, with stars such as



"And the winner of the best political snub of the year..."

Elizabeth Hurley, Julia Roberts and Sigourney Weaver having to be escorted along the red carpet to the Grosvenor House Hotel in London under umbrellas. Ms Weaver won best performance by an actress in a supporting role for *The Ice Storm*.

The American film *LA Confidential*, which scooped 12 nominations — the highest for this year's event — won awards for best editing and best sound. Sean Connery received Bafta's most prestigious honour, a fellowship, in recognition of his lifetime achievements in film.

Jane Clarke, the chief executive of Bafta, said: "British films are enjoying a renaissance and the fiftieth Bafta awards will contribute to this climate of confidence and optimism and reflect the UK's position as a leading filmmaking nation."

Baz Luhrmann's version of *Romeo and Juliet* won four awards: best achievement and direction, best adapted screenplay, best achievement in film music and best production design.

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Ancient monument status for rabbit warren

BY ROBIN YOUNG

A MOUND in the middle of a field is to be preserved as a national monument because English Heritage has identified it as the medieval equivalent of factory farming: a purpose-built rabbit warren.

Although lacking the majesty of Stonehenge or the appeal of York Minster, the rabbit warren excites experts because it shows how meat and fur were supplied 700 years ago. English Heritage says the warren was probably built in the 1280s in what was then Leicester Forest, owned by the Earls of Leicester. Purpose-built warrens contained

breeding chambers known as pillow mounds to make catching the animals easier. Nesting places were made of stone slabs or cut into the subsoil, with sloping underground drainage channels. The warrens maintained a supply of meat and skins for medieval people.

English Heritage's application to have the site registered has received the support of the district council's environment services committee at Blaby in Leicestershire. Sarah Travis, the committee chairman, said: "It could be of particular use to school children as they normally study medieval Britain in the classroom but will now get to see living proof."

The recommendation that the warren be accorded ancient monument status has to be confirmed by Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary. His decision is expected this year. English Heritage says: "Early warrens were mostly associated with the higher levels of society, but they gradually spread in popularity. The profits from a successfully managed warren could be considerable and many areas were set aside for warrens at the expense of agricultural land. By the 16th and 17th centuries they were a common feature on most manors and estates before a decline in use in the 19th century when beef and lamb became more widely available."

Photograph, page 24



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Hague wants Ulster trip with Blair and Ashdown

Philip Webster and Martin Fletcher on a proposal to underline Tory input to Stormont peace deal

WILLIAM HAGUE is to propose to Tony Blair that they and Paddy Ashdown should campaign together in Northern Ireland for a "yes" vote in the referendum on the peace proposals.

The Tory leader believes that the three leaders appearing together in the campaign would be the best way of showing the people of Ulster the unity of purpose in the rest of Britain over the agreement reached on Good Friday.

There are no positive proposals at all to put forward from their side, and people in Northern Ireland have just got to make up their minds. Is this the person that offers the way forward in the future or not? Obviously I would not say so.

David Trimble, the UUP leader, won the support of 72 per cent of his party's ruling council on Saturday. The vote by the Province's largest party all but guaranteed that the agreement will be approved in the referendum but a big majority will be required if the new arrangements are to work.

Showing they have turned their back on undemocratic means. What we want to hear from Mr Adams and his associates is that what they call the war is over.

President Clinton is this week expected to abandon his tentative plans to visit Northern Ireland just a few days before the referendum, after Mr Trimble again gave a warning that his presence could be seen as political interference.

able personal victory for Mr Trimble. He won his party's leadership as the hardliner who faced down nationalists over the 1995 Drumreece march, but is now presenting himself as a champion of sensible political compromise.

William Hague, page 20
Leading article, page 21

Sinn Fein demands backing for assembly

Republicans are urged to break the mould, writes Martin Fletcher

SINN FEIN'S leaders urged the republican movement yesterday to take the momentous step of entering Northern Ireland's new assembly and abandon its traditional abstentionist policy.

While Mr Adams, Sinn Fein's President, did not openly endorse the agreement, he called it a "basis for advancement" and argues that with greater political strength Sinn Fein could have achieved a better deal from the negotiations.

Sandys's election agent during the 1981 republican hunger strike, said Mr Cahill's appearance at Stormont castle during negotiations had shocked Unionists. He too urged the movement to build its political strength in order to "send more rebels to the castle to dismantle the Orange state".

Martin Meehan, another legendary republican figure, said nationalists would form the majority in the north by 2015 and be able to vote Northern Ireland out of existence.

was the only way to consolidate the movement's "massive" gains of recent years. These speakers received standing ovations. The few who opposed the agreement during the two-hour debate received noisier than polite applause. The conference was attended by the four IRA

planning to bomb London's electricity sub stations last July. A controversial ban on British soldiers and members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary playing Irish football is set to be lifted next month in the new spirit of reconciliation

sweeps the Ireland. The Gaelic Athletic Association has called a special meeting for May 30 to discuss the abolition of the notorious Rule 21 barring members of the British security forces playing either Irish football or hurling.



Gerry Adams receives a standing ovation after his address to Sinn Fein's annual conference in Dublin. He argued that the agreement was "a basis for advancement"

Banks

Continued from page 1 million, while Barclays and Lloyds TSB have approximately £1 billion each, according to city analysts. The former building societies the Halifax, the Alliance & Leicester and the Woolwich, are also awash with cash, analysts say.

Nurses' leader says jobs crisis threatens NHS

THE existence of the National Health Service will be imperilled if it fails to keep and recruit nurses, Christine Hancock, general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, said last night.

Blair aide leaves to join BSkyB

TIM ALLAN, one of the Prime Minister's closest aides, is leaving Downing Street to join the BSkyB television channel.

Ministers debate solution to union recognition row

FIRMS would be required to recognise trade unions if 40 per cent of the workforce took part in a ballot and a majority voted in favour under a plan to solve the disagreement between the TUC and CBI over how the Government is to reform industrial relations.

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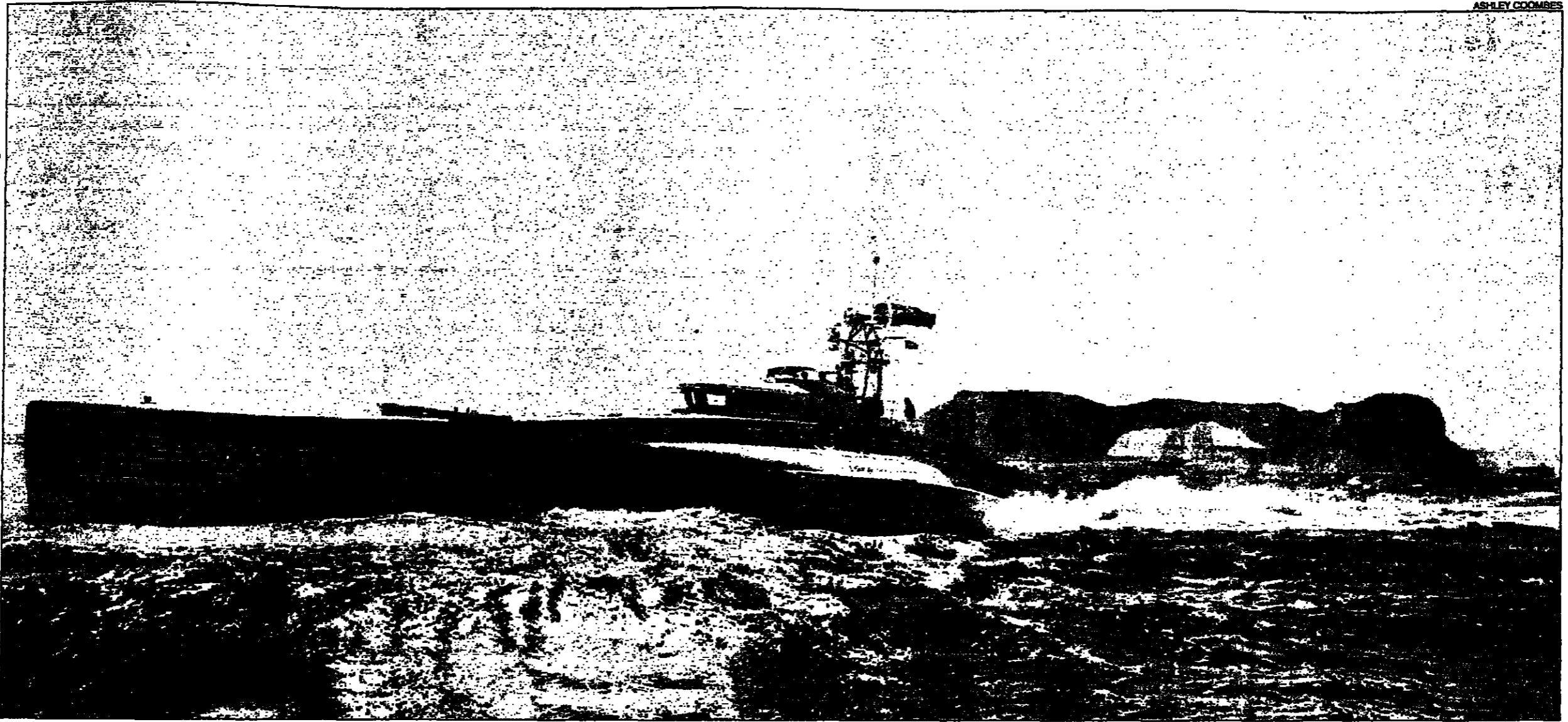
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The Cable & Wireless *Adventurer* leaving the Rock of Gibraltar behind yesterday as she set off to beat the record for a circumnavigation of the world by surface craft. The present record of 83 days is held by a US submarine

Powerboaters race off in a Fogg of excitement

By Lucy Lawrence

A BRITISH powerboat team set off from Gibraltar yesterday hoping to follow in the footsteps of the legendary globe-trotter Phileas Fogg and journey around the world in 80 days. The 16 crew of the *Adventurer* will try to beat the

38-year-old record of 83 days set by an American nuclear submarine. The Southampton-built 114ft *Adventurer* can cruise at up to 25 knots through 10ft waves, and has a range of 4,000 miles between refuelling stops. The start of the 26,000-mile challenge, sponsored

by Cable & Wireless, was marked by the boom of a cannon as a flotilla of yachts and speedboats accompanied the multi-hulled craft out of Gibraltar Harbour. The *Adventurer* should reach Monte Carlo — the first of 15 ports of call — on Tuesday. From there, she will head for the Suez Canal,

then the Red Sea and into the Indian Ocean. After Hong Kong and Japan, the craft will cross the Pacific, entering the Atlantic by the Panama Canal. The final stage of the voyage, from New York to Gibraltar, should be completed by July 3. In 1960 the submarine *USS*

Triton voyaged round the world in 83 days, 9 hours and 54 minutes, a time the *Adventurer's* crew are aiming to beat by a week. Jock Wishart, 46, from Kingston upon Thames, the team's leader, holder of the round-Britain powerboat record, prepared for the voyage by rowing across

the Atlantic last October. "We believe that we have built a unique boat that is more than equipped to withstand the toughest conditions that the oceans offer us," he said. Sarah Aynesworth, 22, a Bristol University student from the Yorkshire Dales and the youngest of

the crew, said everyone was raring to go. "We have gone through a six-month selection procedure and a lot of training together, so we have had time to get to know each other and we have really gelled as a team." Ian Bosworth, 53, from Falmouth, Cornwall, is captain of the *Adventurer*.

University sued by student alleging exchange-trip rape

By Gillian Harris, Scotland Correspondent

A GRADUATE is suing her university after she says that she was raped by three Russian soldiers while on an exchange trip to Ukraine.

The 23-year-old American, who graduated last year with a degree in Russian, accuses St Andrews University, Fife, of negligence over the incident at the Black Sea port of Odessa. She claims that she was attacked by soldiers from the Ukrainian naval base while walking on the beach with a male friend during the five-month compulsory exchange in 1996.

She says that she reported the rape and a savage assault on her friend to officials at Odessa State University, where she was studying. She says that it promised that the police would investigate but nothing more was heard. The incident was reported to the authorities at St Andrews as an "attempted rape". The student cut short her trip and returned to her home in the United States.

She is taking legal action to warn other students of the dangers of such trips. A friend said: "Her concern is for others. It was an awful and sickening attack."

Stephen Magee, director of the university's international department, said yesterday: "I am extremely concerned to hear of this and will investigate fully. The issue is of such a serious nature that we want to investigate why it is that the allegation is being raised two years after the event. It was

not brought to our attention until last Friday afternoon. The university takes its obligations towards its students very seriously.

"We are almost paternalistic in our attitude. We chose Odessa for the exchange precisely because it is the safest of the cities in the former Soviet Union."

The group of 20 Russian-language students from St Andrews, Edinburgh and Glasgow universities who visited Odessa in the spring of 1996 were told about deteriorating conditions in Ukraine before they went but were shocked by their experiences. They complained that the canteen in the student hostel was used as a pick-up spot for prostitutes, gunfire was heard in the corridors at night and on one occasion police sprayed teargas into the refectory to disperse a group of students.

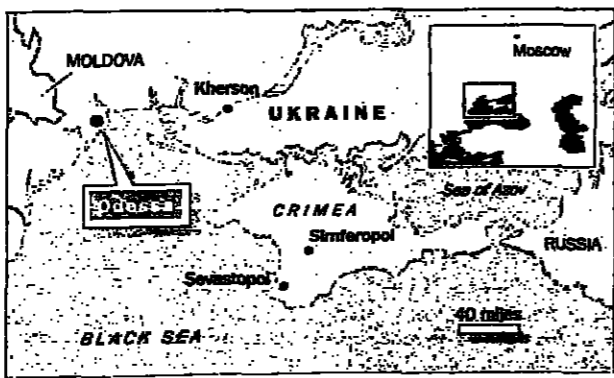
Alex Porter, who was on the trip, said that the rape was the worst in a series of unpleasant

incidents. "Generally it was very, very dangerous," he said. "We did complain but no one was listening to us."

The Scottish students say they sent St Andrews University many e-mails expressing their concern. Half of them abandoned the student hostel, unable to bear the freezing dormitories, and paid for alternative accommodation.

On their return to St Andrews, the students presented their complaints to the students' association, which took up the matter with the university. At the time neither was aware that a student had claimed that she was raped.

Since her return to Scotland, the alleged rape victim has received counselling and, on the advice of student association officers, has decided to take legal action. Joe Myles, a Dundee-based solicitor, said last night: "I can confirm that I have been instructed in this matter and we are preparing a case."



Customs seize 18 million black-market cigarettes

By Stewart Tandler, Crime Correspondent

A HAUL of 18 million cigarettes destined for Britain's black market has been seized by Customs investigators at Heathrow airport after officials became suspicious of the huge numbers being stored in a warehouse.

The cigarettes were originally bought for export without any duty paid. Instead the smugglers planned to use the EU's liberal freight transit controls and a paperwork fraud to divert them on to the domestic market for sale at about £15 for 200 instead of more than £30 duty paid. The result would have been a loss

of more than £2.5 million in taxes.


Investigators yesterday said the seizure of more than 30 tons of Benson and Hedges and Regal brands was the biggest ever made. The tobacco industry estimates that black market sales are now worth £4.5 billion a year and Customs investigators say seizures have escalated in the past six months.

The cigarettes had been bought back into Britain and were due to be exported from Felixstowe to West Africa via Cyprus and the Gulf States. Customs officers think the

cigarettes would never have left the country.

Papers would have been drawn up showing a cargo had left but the cigarettes would have disappeared to distributors for backstreet tobacconists and discount stores. A shipper and a shipping agent were arrested and released on bail.

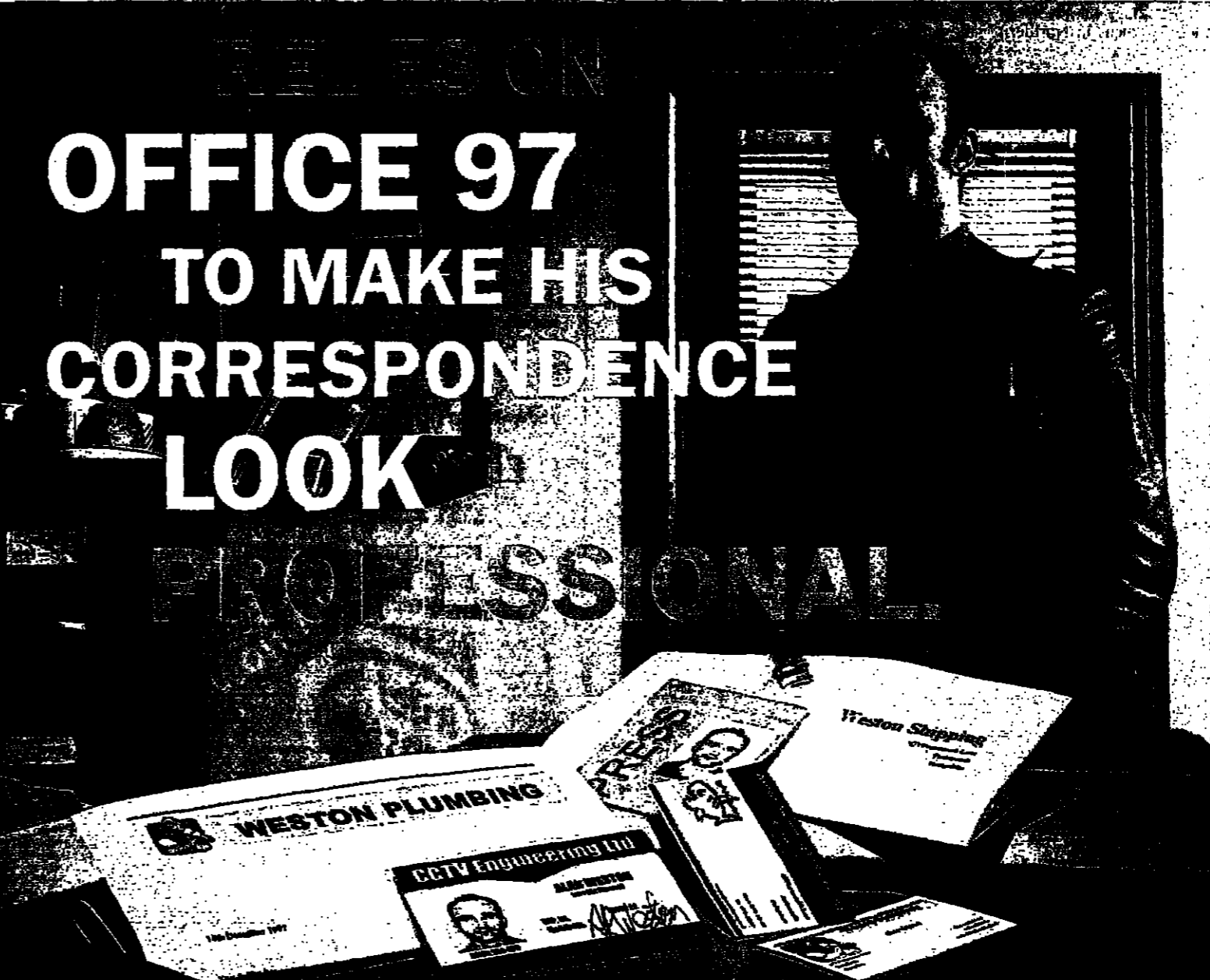
Customs intelligence officers say gangs have abandoned smuggling drugs such as cannabis and started cigarette operations because the penalties if they are caught are far lower and the profits are still good.



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ALAN WESTON

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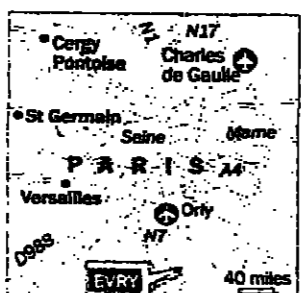
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Plea for law reform to save British racing

A LEADING racehorse trainer yesterday urged Tony Blair to aid British racing by reforming the betting laws after details emerged of how the French Government helped to lure 120 of Sheikh Mohammed's best horses across the Channel.

Trainer asks Blair to intervene to prevent sheikh taking top horses to France, writes Richard Evans



John Gosden, who won the Derby last year with Benny The Dip and trains 90 horses in Newmarket for the Maktoums, said that if the Dubai family carried out their threat to leave British racing it would be equivalent to Manchester United or Liverpool leaving the FA Carling Premiership.

Restructuring. Racing is in a legislative strait-jacket that goes back to the 1960s. The status quo favours bookmakers and government — rather than racing — and that has to change. You cannot have bookmakers making record profits and the Government taking four times more than any other major international racing country.

The losses suffered by a racing operation the size of the Maktoums in Britain are huge "and if you can go elsewhere and reduce that dramatically there comes a stage when you cannot not go elsewhere," Gosden added.

How grass is greener for breeders on foreign turf

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

SHEIKH MOHAMMED may have been lured to France by higher prize-money and the prospect of having an entire private racecourse on which to train his horses.

Form of national lottery based on horse racing results, and the Government offers breeders a 60 per cent bonus on top of the prize-money for winning horses bred in France.

around 2.4 million francs (£240,000) and France Galop is hoping, naturally, for a rent above this amount," the newspaper reported.

France Galop, the French equivalent of the Jockey Club, is considering the sheikh's application to take over the abandoned Evry racecourse outside Paris, where he is expected to train more than 100 of his best young horses, and a ruling will be issued next week.

Apart from the potentially increased profits to be made from racing in France, the sheikh may also have been attracted by the facilities at Evry, with a fully-equipped, if eerily silent, racecourse on which to train his horses. The site has stables for 120 horses, as well as new paddocks, parade and washing areas.

While Sheikh Mohammed may be able to win more with his horses in French racing, he will also have to endure the high costs of employment and increased social charges which have persuaded so many French companies to move to Britain.



Tide's out: surfers on Fistral beach, Newquay. The resort fears the loss of the Pro Surf event will hit trade

France leads new wave as top surf event quits Cornish town

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES

RUSSELL WINTER, the only Briton to win a place in the world surfing championships, was looking forward to competing in his home town of Newquay this summer.

they can not afford to support it alone. For eight months, the company's owner David Gower, has tried to find additional sponsorship and win greater support from the Cornish tourist authorities.



Reed: said surf-related businesses would be hit

event which brought the world's top pros to Cornwall and it won't be easy to get them back. Some people are trying to organise an alternative contest but it will be the difference between Formula One and a banger race.

But the annual surf contest that was first held in the Cornish resort in 1981 has moved across the Channel. Last year the 12-day festival of sun, sand and surf attracted 300,000 surfing enthusiasts to Cornwall.

The coast around the town, near Bayonne north of the Spanish border, is the most popular surfing spot in France, where waves reach heights of four metres and the weather is hotter than Newquay.

Winter, 22, is in Australia preparing for a world championship event north of Sydney. He is more than just a local hero. To qualify, he had to out-surf the world's best in their home waters.

Such an approach would find favour with the Maktoums. Sheikh Hamdan said: "There are too many racecourses in Britain that need financial support to continue."

The decision to quit Newquay was a blow to one of Britain's fastest growing sports, and to the Cornish economy. There are about 70 businesses in the town that depend entirely on surfers, and shop owners such as Andy Reed believe that the

loss of the surf event will damage them. Hotels, restaurants and hire car companies will also count the cost. One surfer, who pays for his sport by working in a surf equipment shop, said yesterday: "This was a grand prix of the biggest of those events."

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Running your own business: Could you catch problems early?

HERE ARE NINE MISTAKES THAT A LOT OF NEW BUSINESSES MAKE.



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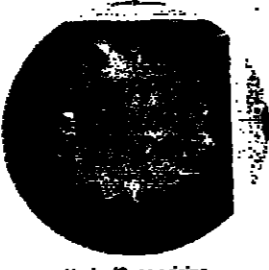


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Rabbi calls on Judaism to seek converts

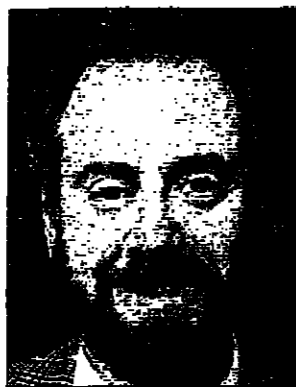
By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A LEADING rabbi has embarked upon a drive to convert people to Judaism in an attempt to stem declining numbers. Jonathan Romain, of Maidenhead Reform Synagogue, says it is time to end what he describes as the traditional Jewish prejudice against converts.

"British Jewry needs converts more than converts need Judaism," he says. "The Reform movement has to adopt a much more proactive approach to conversion."

Dr Romain makes his plea in *Manna*, the quarterly journal of the Sternberg Centre for Judaism in North London, headquarters of the growing Reform movement. Unlike Christianity and other religions, Judaism does not proselytise and many synagogues discourage conversion.

Dr Romain's call for change comes out of a concern, reflected throughout the Jewish community, that intermarriage is causing irreparable losses to Judaism. While most of the country's 300,000 Jewish people are Orthodox, increasing numbers are joining the Reform movement to retain their Jewish identity but with a more liberal approach to



Romain: worried about losses by intermarriage

Jewish law and tradition. But with 44 per cent of Jewish men choosing non-Jewish partners when they marry, and a rate nearly as high for Jewish women, far more are dropping out of community life altogether.

About 120 adults convert through the Reform synagogues each year, compared to an estimated "outmarriage" rate of 1,500. "It is clear that we are failing to attract even a tenth of the numbers to which we could aspire," the rabbi says.

He predicts that Britain could soon face a situation like

that in America, where more than half of Jewish people "marry out". "At worst, the community will have to face a massive drop-out of young child-producing, income-generating Jews," he says. At best, he forecasts a future of mixed-faith households.

He calls for synagogues to advertise in their newsletters that they run conversion classes and invite people to attend. Rabbis should jettison the "quaint but totally ridiculous notion" of rejecting or delaying a candidate to see if they persist, he says.

Dr Romain, whose wife Sybil is a rabbi, has a growing community of more than 700 families. Unlike many synagogues, he runs regular conversion courses and is actively welcoming to converts.

His call is unlikely to be greeted with enthusiasm in the wider Jewish community, where conversion is often discouraged. Dr Romain, a broadcaster and author of *Till Faith Us Do Part*, a study of intermarriage, says that instead of being welcomed, as they would in other faiths, converts to Judaism can find themselves regarded as an oddity or a threat.



Cheryl Weale, a convert to Judaism, at Dr Romain's synagogue, which runs regular conversion courses and has a community of 700 families

'My new religion is all deed, not creed'

MOST people who convert to Judaism still do so after marrying a Jewish partner, but increasing numbers of other people are turning to the faith. Cheryl Weale, 41, is one of a growing number who create a mixed-faith marriage by conversion. Mrs Weale, a member of Maidenhead Reform Synagogue, had no religious

upbringing. Her parents were baptised and married in the Church of England but did not have her baptised. She traced Jewish ancestry three generations back in her family and felt drawn to Judaism in her late twenties. Her husband, Philip, a civil servant with a Welsh chapel background, decided not to convert with

her but supported her decision. Their two sons were circumcised and have been brought up as Jewish.

Mrs Weale, who works at a students' union and teaches Hebrew and religion to children at the synagogue, said: "I had no religion before. The more I found out about Judaism, the more I felt comfortable with it. I have

a sense of place and belonging, a sense of family, an understanding, an ethos, a way of life. Christianity demanded too much of a leap of faith on an intellectual level for me. There was too much dogma and not enough deed. Judaism is all deed, not creed. I have never regretted my conversion for an instant."

Magdalen comes to rescue of Oxford Islamic centre

Michael Binyon on deal to end wrangle over 'grandiose' building

A PLANNING dispute over a new Islamic centre in Oxford has ended with the decision by the centre to withdraw from its proposed location and move to a site farther from the university's dreaming spires.

Rebuffed by Merton College, which threatened court action to prevent the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies erecting a multimillion pound research centre on land Merton offered it in 1994, the centre has been rescued by Magdalen, one of Oxford's

richest colleges. Magdalen has offered a larger, alternative site to accommodate the largest and most comprehensive scholarly centre for the study of Islam in Britain.

The centre, strongly supported by the Prince of Wales, had proposed putting up a building on the edge of Magdalen deer park that would have included a mosque and minaret in a synthesis of Moorish and Gothic architecture. The plans led to heated controversy, with some dons



A model of the original Islamic centre in Oxford that had been planned on land offered by Merton College

objecting strongly to Oxford's planning authorities that the proposals were too grandiose and the proposed centre too large. Merton, which offered the land in 1994, changed its

mind after seeing the designs. Claiming that it had not approved the building, Merton served a High Court writ on the centre to nullify the agreement, and both sides

prepared for long and costly litigation. The centre, which has considerable financial backing from Saudi Arabia and Brunei as well as British Muslims,

said that it offered to adapt its designs but that Merton then tried to reduce the land available by almost half, not to grant direct access to the centre across its land, change

the freehold title to a 99-year lease and renegotiate the purchase price.

The centre announced at the weekend that it had therefore pulled out of its agreement and would resubmit a planning application for a new design on the Magdalen site, almost twice as large. Farhan Nizami, the centre's director, said it wanted to maintain close and friendly relations with all of Oxford's academic institutions. The centre already funds academic appointments at several Oxford colleges. No one at Merton would comment on its dispute with the centre, but in a statement through its solicitors the college said its objections had been based on the size of the building and the adverse impact it would have had on Merton's adjoining land.

Sources in Oxford said yesterday that jealousy by some nearby colleges might have had a part in Merton's change of mind, especially those colleges that had been seeking extra land for student accommodation. There was also clear concern at the involvement of Middle East money and influence, especially in the light of the abortive attempt to build a business centre in Oxford funded by the Syrian businessman Waqf al-Said.

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TA centres face cut of 40% in defence review

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE number of Territorial Army centres throughout the country will be reduced by nearly 40 per cent under Ministry of Defence plans.

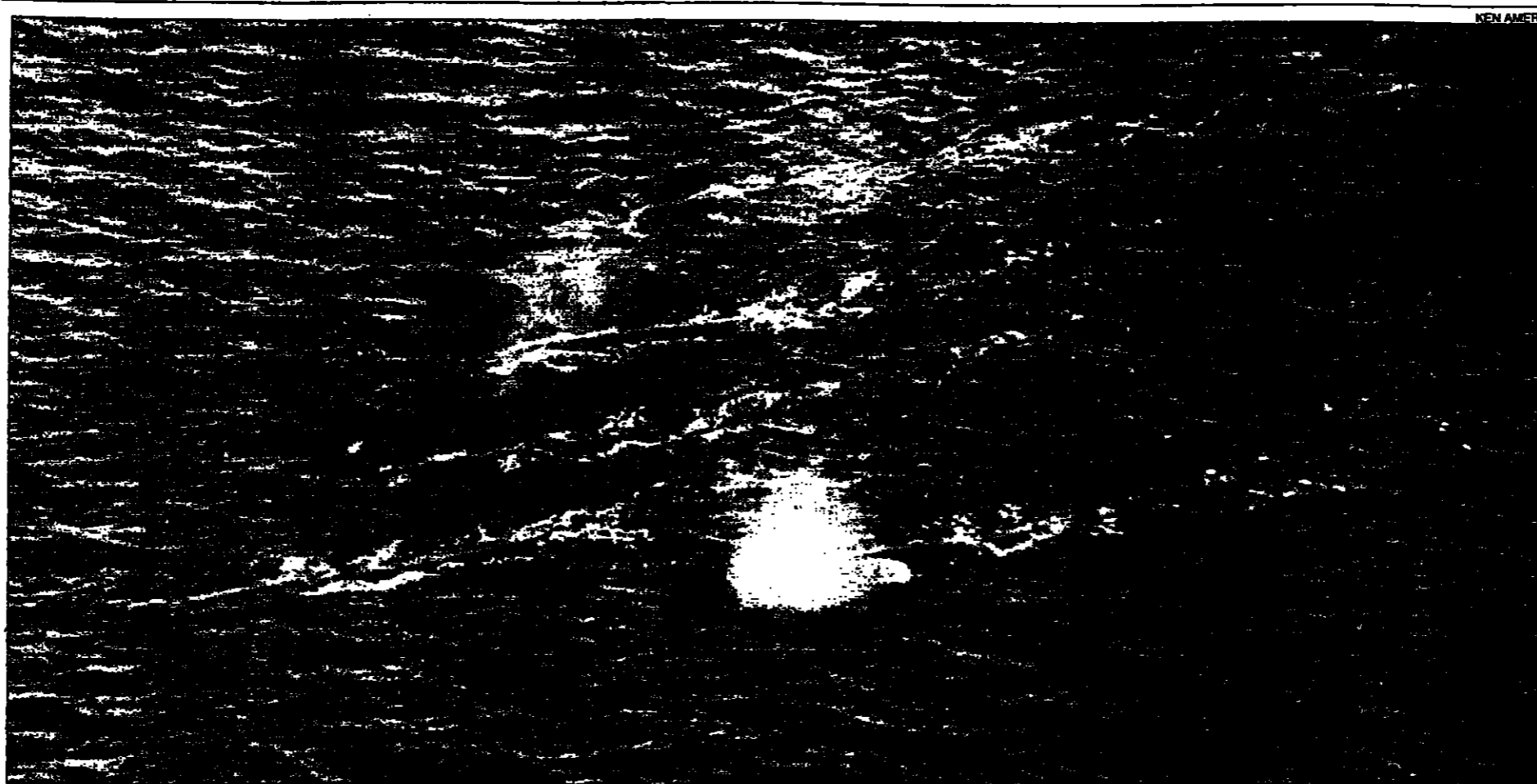
The cutback, proposed by Army chiefs as part of the Government's strategic defence review, would result in the closure of 172 of the 443 Territorial Army centres. It would also reduce the number of part-time soldiers from 57,600 to about 40,000.

Although the proposals have yet to be approved by ministers, the Army's plans are expected to go ahead because it is accepted that, with the end of the Cold War, there is no longer a requirement for a large force of part-time soldiers.

In return, ministers are expected to approve the recruitment of an extra 3,000 regular soldiers to fill gaps in the support services, such as the Royal Engineers, the Royal Logistic Corps and the Royal Signals. The infantry battalions would be hardest hit, with the number of TA infantry personnel cut from 17,587 to 6,630, resulting in a closure of 120 TA centres. The present 36 battalions would drop to 15. The manpower figures include about 600 regular army posts, non-regular permanent staff and civilians.

Large cuts would come in the TA's Royal Armoured Corps regiments, with yeomanry personnel reduced from 2,568 to fewer than 1,000, which would close another 23 TA centres. The TA Army Air Corps, which consists of 203 people, including 25 regular posts, 14 non-regular permanent staff and seven civilians, would be abolished. A senior TA officer said the figures confirmed his worst fears.

However, the TA Army Medical Service is set to increase from 5,218 personnel to 7,457, up nearly 40 per cent. TA Royal Signals numbers would rise from 6,127 to 6,238.



By GILLIAN HARRIS
SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

Orkney whales still trapped

RESCUERS were on stand-by yesterday as seven sperm whales trapped in the shallow waters of Scapa Flow swam dangerously close to the shore. The whales, above, which have spent almost a week in the natural harbour, have made no attempt to escape and do not appear to be distressed. But there are fears that the juvenile males, ranging in

length from 30 to 60ft, will beach themselves and die.

The plan is to lure the group to safety using small boats transmitting the sound of female whales. But according to Mike Lynch, the Orkney-based inspector of the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty

to Animals, there is still a chance that they will find their own way to the open sea.

On Saturday a spotter plane flew over Scapa Flow, giving the Orkney Harbour Board its first opportunity to count the whales. "We had thought there were five but it

appears there are seven," Mr Lynch said. "They still seem to be quite content so, hopefully, there is nothing to worry about just now. They are just swimming about. But we are keeping a watching brief."

Meanwhile boats in the area have been warned to look out for the

visitors, which are usually found in the deep waters of the North Atlantic, eating one ton of fish and squid a day.

Chris Booth, who records sightings of whales in Orkney, said the whales were seen swimming on the surface of the water yesterday afternoon. "They seem to be moving about quite happily, but as each day goes by and they show no signs of leaving voluntarily, a rescue effort gets a bit more likely," he said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Child sex suspect 'on canal'

A man on the run after being charged with paedophile offences is thought to be using the canal network to avoid arrest. Richard Burrows, 54, of Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, a former children's home teacher in Cheshire, is accused of offences against 11 children. Cheshire police said Mr Burrows, an experienced boater, was sighted by an officer on a barge in Warwickshire in January.

Royal fire

A staff cottage on the Duke of York's estate at Sunninghill Park, Berkshire, was badly damaged after a chimney fire spread. Neither he nor the Duchess and their children was in residence and nobody was hurt.

The kindest cut

Redundancy can dramatically improve your quality of life, according to survey. Sixty-nine per cent of people who had been sacked said their lives had improved significantly on turning freelance. The Freelance Centre reported.

Cancer targeted

An extra £10 million is to be given to the NHS to treat bowel cancer, the Government said. There are 31,000 people with the disease in Britain, of whom 19,000 a year die. Survival rates are lower than in many western countries.

Bombe surprise

Suzanne Lavelle, 33, found a live hand grenade in a park at Scarborough, and took it home lest children should play with it. She put it on the kitchen table and called police. An army bomb disposal team later blew it up.

Blithe car sale

Noel Coward's white Mercedes 280SE cabriolet has sold for £19,225 at auction in Stuttgart. The 1967 car, kept at the playwright's home on Lake Geneva until his death in 1973, was bought by an American. Letters, page 21

Outcry at atomic waste dump in Thames

Campaigners say tritium may pose serious health risk, writes Nick Nuttall

THE nuclear weapons factory at Aldermaston in Berkshire has asked the Environment Agency for permission to dump two tanks of waste containing radioactive tritium in the Thames.

The application to dispose of the waste at Pangbourne has angered local residents and campaigners, who claim it may put the environment and human health at risk. Managers at Aldermaston Weapons Establishment

have discharged tritium into the Thames before; the proposal has only come to light because the Government has since relaxed rules on national security.

The two 50 cubic metre tanks of liquid tritium waste are believed to be waste products from the manufacture of Trident nuclear warheads. Piping the waste into

the Thames would increase by 20 times the emissions of tritium into the river.

But Peter Brember, the Environment Agency's site inspector for Aldermaston, said yesterday that this was only one option. Others were crafing the tanks and sending them to Sellafield in Cumbria for discharging at sea, or superheating the waste and

evaporating it. It could also be put in coastal sewers.

A spokesman for the National Radiological Protection Board said that tritium was not considered particularly dangerous. "When compared to, say, plutonium, it is millions of times less toxic. However, it does not mean you can throw it around." But Frank Barnaby, a

nuclear physicist and former director of SIPRI, the international peace institute in Sweden, claims there is evidence that tritium can damage human chromosomes, causing cancers and motor neurone disease.

Professor Alice Stewart, of Birmingham University, will shortly publish evidence that low-level ionising radiation,

like that from tritium, is ten times more deadly than had been supposed.

Hospitals routinely dispose of low-level waste to sewers under agency authorisations. The amount at Aldermaston is about ten times the amount that would be allowed under most hospital licences, but far less than the emissions of Sellafield.

A public consultation on the proposal is due to begin in the autumn.

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Ministers get tough on school zones plan

BY JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

TOWN halls are being told to rip up national agreements on teachers' pay and conditions if they want to play a leading role in the Government's education action zones to be launched next month.

Ministers are determined to resist pressure by teaching unions to blunt one of the most radical experiments in social policy since the Second World War.

Under the policy, groups of private businesses and local education authorities can form consortiums that will be given a free hand to raise over-achieving schools and to innovate by, for example, lengthening the school day, reducing holidays or abandoning parts of the national curriculum. The plans will link with health and employment initiatives already announced by the Government.

The first three-way programme is likely to be in Plymouth, which is expected to be among the first 25 education zones operating by next January. The city, which

has been allocated health and employment zones, has lodged an education bid that would keep schools open until 6pm and introduce a four-term year.

Education zones are to be established in areas of poor performance, giving groups of about 20 primary and secondary schools an extra £500,000 a year from a combination of public and private sources. David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, has urged bidders to make full use of powers to vary the national curriculum and teachers' pay and conditions.

Teachers' unions see the zones as the first step to local pay bargaining, however, and have threatened industrial action if their members' conditions of service are threatened. They have been monitoring the bidding process nationally and seeking guarantees from local authorities that they will continue current agreements.

The National Union of Teachers has secured such guarantees from half of the local authorities bidding for zones, and expects others to follow suit. But the union claims that authorities are being "leaned on" by the Department for Education and Employment to toughen up their bids.

Government sources acknowledge that civil servants from the department's standards and effectiveness unit are discussing the 60 bids with their promoters before recommending successful candidates to ministers. Teachers' contracts are one important area of discussion, although proposals based on existing pay and conditions may find favour if other elements of the bid are sufficiently innovative. At least five zones will be announced next month and begin operating in September. The next 20 successful candidates will be chosen in July.



Tamar-side Community College in Plymouth, likely to be included in one of the first three-way programmes. It is likely to stay open until 6pm

Sugar firm sweetens the learning curve

Companies with no education experience may join in, write John O'Leary and David Charter

A SUGAR manufacturer, an airport and an expeditions organiser are among the companies bidding to help run poorly-performing schools in the action zone programme.

David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, has ruled out the possibility of private enterprises making profits from their involvement in action zones, but firms will be able to sell services to local schools and give their names to them if governors agree.

The New York-based Edison Project, which runs 25 schools on contract from state boards, is putting together a bid for a group of schools in Tameside on the outskirts of Manchester.

Nord Anglia plc, which owns independent schools and runs Ofsted inspection teams, is involved in a bid for schools in Barnsley, South Yorkshire.

But the 60 bids being scrutinised by civil servants include a host of famous names from outside the education world. The two bids covering separate parts of Barnsley also count BT, the Prince's Trust and both universities in Sheffield among their supporters.

Tate and Lyle is among the local authority's partners in one of the leading bids, for a group of schools in Newham, East London, which already has a health action zone. Birmingham International Airport is supporting one of

Executive of World Challenge, said the unions had nothing to fear. "Teachers' pay and conditions might be renegotiated, but not dictated. No action zone is going to succeed by reducing the morale of teachers."

The Plymouth package would cover one of the poorest areas of England and be based on two comprehensive and their feeder primary schools. Parkside School registered its first GCSE passes only last year, while Tamar-side Community College failed an Ofsted inspection before improving sufficiently to be removed from special measures.

The proposals, from a consortium of local authority, business and voluntary

groups, for a four-term year with a daily optional session lasting until 6pm alarmed teachers. But John Ingham, the city council leader who chairs the Plymouth 2000 with the chief executive of an American engineering company, said longer hours would be negotiated with extra staff and volunteers. "If there can be a better use of community facilities, we have got to consider it," he said.

One of the most innovative bids is by The Synetics Education Initiative, backed by BT, Equitable Life and Guinness publishers. It aims to teach teachers and children at 12 schools in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, to think laterally.



Ingham: exploring better use of facilities

the city's two bids, and the expedition company World Challenge is a partner in a bid in Grimsby. Charles Rigby, the chief

Lessons on drugs for pupils aged five

By RICHARD FORD HOME CORRESPONDENT

CHILDREN aged five should be given lessons about drugs as part of the national curriculum, according to a report published today.

Primary schools should be used to counter glamorous images of drugs and inaccurate and incomplete information about illegal substances, says the report by the Standing Conference on the Misuse of Drugs.

Lord Newton, chairman of Scoda, who as Tony Newton chaired the Conservative Government's Cabinet committee on drug misuse, said that young people already knew a lot about drugs from their friends and the media. He added: "We must ensure that this incomplete and often inaccurate information is not their only source of knowledge."

Roger Howard, chief executive of Scoda, said: "The Government's own research has demonstrated that drug education programmes with primary school children can reduce experimentation with drugs."

But family pressure groups condemned the move. Cornelia Oddie, of Family and Youth Concern, said: "Five is far too young. It is robbing children of their childhood to be telling them about drugs at that age."

Adrian Rogers, director of the Conservative Family Institute, called for Scoda to be abolished. He said: "Introducing drug education to five-year-olds is a desperate measure, which is at best well-intentioned and at worst simply going to open up appetites and desires."

The report - *Drugs: A Plan of Action for the Next Century* - says that 40 per cent of those aged 15 and 16 admitted having taken an illegal substance, and crimes committed by drug addicts were estimated to cost the country £1 billion a year.

The number of young people notified as addicts to the Home Office has risen by 138 per cent between 1992 and 1996. In the same period, NHS funding allocated to treating drug misuse rose by just 67 per cent.

Letters, page 21

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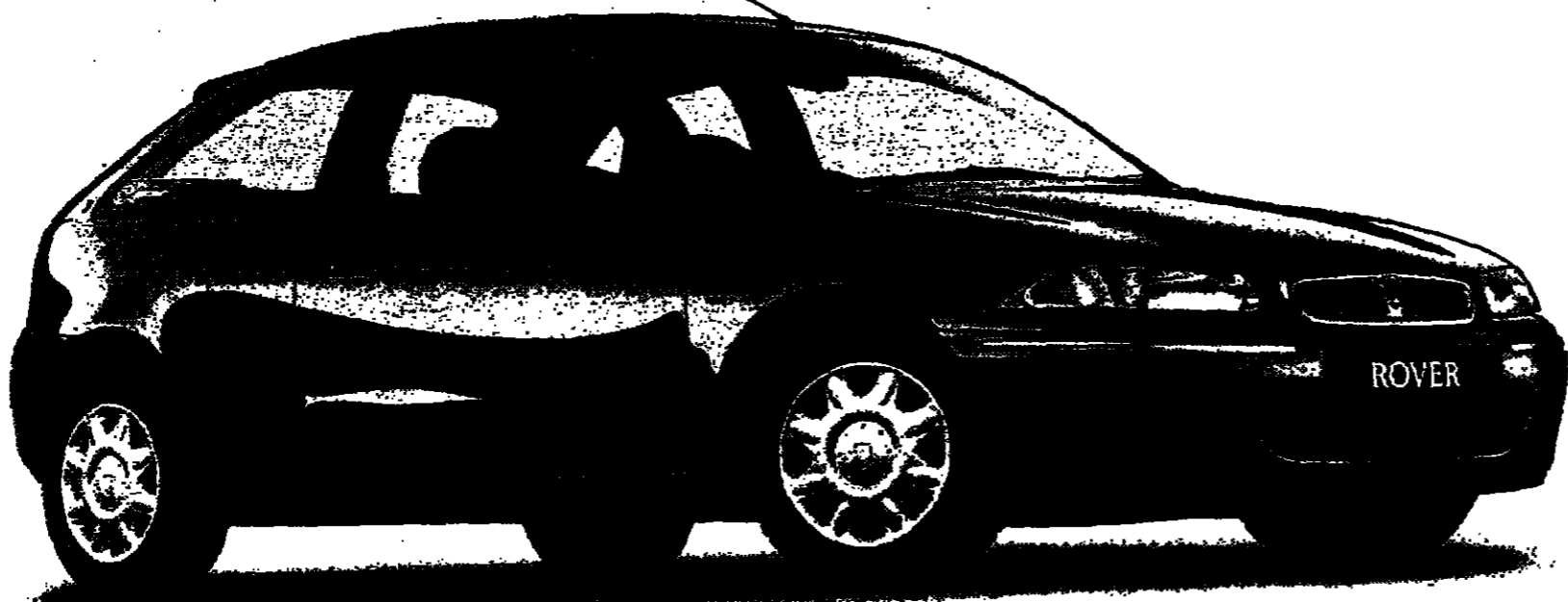
Lessons on drugs for pupils aged five

BY WILLIAM FORD
CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Five-year-old pupils should be taught about the dangers of drugs from the age of five, according to a report by a group of experts.

The report, which was published last week, says that children should be taught about the dangers of drugs from the age of five, and that parents should be encouraged to talk to their children about the dangers of drugs from an early age.

The report also says that schools should be encouraged to teach children about the dangers of drugs from the age of five, and that parents should be encouraged to talk to their children about the dangers of drugs from an early age.



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Labour's peers are simply not working

TONY BLAIR is facing embarrassment in the House of Lords over the poor voting record of senior peers whom he appointed last year to increase Labour's numbers on the backbenches.

But in the case of the missing peers, the crime writer Ruth Rendell is above suspicion. She has voted in 43 of the 49 divisions in the House of Lords since she was elevated as Baroness Rendell of Babergh.

Some of the peers, dubbed "Tony's Cronies" for their close links to the Prime Minister, have voted fewer than ten times in the 65 divisions that have taken place since the election. One peer, Lord Simpson of Dunkeld, the managing director of the electronics giant, GEC, has not voted in any of the 47 divisions that have taken place since he was introduced to the Lords last November.

The 41 new Labour life peers elevated last year make up about a quarter of the party's 157-strong team in the Lords, and their votes are desperately needed by the Whips to head off Tory ambushes. Most of them were given working peerages, which means they are supposed to be more active than those peers given titles in the bi-annual honours lists.

Analysis of Lords' voting records by *The Times* shows

The lords called 'Tony's cronies' are embarrassing Blair by failing to vote, writes James Landale

that about three quarters of the new peers are regular voters. But the remaining peers have voted less than half the times they could have.

The Government has lost just 18 votes in the Lords since the election. At least four of these defeats, on flagship measures such as the Crime and Disorder Bill and the Teaching and Higher Education Bill, could have been avoided if all the new life peers had bothered to vote. This belies the Government's repeated insistence that all Lords' defeats are a result of the Tories' majority of hereditary peers.

Although the Government can overturn the defeats with its massive majority in the Commons, ministers are becoming increasingly angry at the disruption they cause to the packed programme of parliamentary business.

The poor voting record is

known to anger the Labour Whips, but there is little they can do to persuade peers to vote. It is understood that many of the new appointments were made by Downing Street over the heads of Labour chiefs in the Lords.

The analysis shows the difficulty Mr Blair will be having in selecting his latest list of 20 to 25 new working peers, which is expected in the next few months. Senior Labour peers want guarantees that the new appointments will turn up to vote.

When the new peers were created, Downing Street officials insisted that they were there to work and had not just been thanked for their support for the party. But many peers kept their day jobs and are too busy to attend the Lords.

Lord Simpson is understood to have secured an allowance from Downing Street to continue giving most of his time to GEC. The second worst attender is Baroness Scotland of Aghal, a senior barrister and Millennium Commissioner, who has voted just once. She is understood to have been given dispensation because of a particular case she is working on.

Lord Sainsbury of Turville, the supermarket boss and Labour donor, has voted just five times. Lord Renwick of Clifton, the former ambassador to the United States, has voted 16 times. His office said he had told Mr Blair that he would spend most of his time working for his new job at a merchant bank. "When he had his chat with Tony Blair, he said he would be full time at Robert Flemings but would come to the Lords whenever he could," a spokesman said. "That was understood and made perfectly clear to the Prime Minister."

Lord Hattersley of Sparkbrook, the former deputy Labour leader who waited eight months after receiving his title before actually sitting



Above suspicion: the crime writer Ruth Rendell has a good voting record as Baroness Rendell of Babergh



Poor attenders: Baroness Scotland and Lord Simpson

in the Lords, has voted just six times. Lord Levy, the wealthy publisher who raised most of the money for Tony Blair's blind trusts, has voted just 22 times. Lord Orme, a former Labour MP and minister, has voted 20 times.

Among the best attenders are Baroness Kennedy of the Shaws, the lawyer and human rights campaigner, who has voted 39 times over a similar period, and Lord Montague of Oxford, who has voted 42 times out of a possible 49 divisions.

THE BEST AND THE WORST	
New Labour life peers with worst voting records:	New Labour life peers with best voting records:
Lord Simpson of Dunkeld (George Simpson, chief executive of GEC) 0 (out of 47 possible)	Lord Hoyle (whip) (Doug Hoyle, former chairman of Parliamentary Labour Party) 62 (65)
Baroness Scotland of Aghal (Patricia Scotland, QC and Millennium Commissioner) 1 (48)	Lord Falconer of Thoroton (Spilaker-Generals) 55 (65)
Lord Sainsbury of Turville (David Sainsbury, Chairman of J. Sainsbury) 5 (51)	Lord Harris (Lord Advocate) 54 (65)
Lord Hattersley of Sparkbrook (Roy Hattersley, former Deputy Labour leader) 6 (47)	Lord Gilbert (Defence Minister) 52 (65)
Lord Renwick of Clifton (Sir Robin Renwick, former Ambassador to USA) 16 (51)	Lord Rendell of St Budeaux (former MP for Hull West) 50 (65)
Lord Orme (Stan Orme, former Labour minister) 20 (50)	Lord Davies of Oldham (Bryan Davies, former education spokesman) 47 (65)
Lord Levy (Michael Levy, businessman, publisher) 22 (50)	Baroness Rendell of Babergh (Ruth Rendell, crime novelist) 46 (48)
Lord Bassam of Brighton (Steven Bassam, leader of Brighton and Hove Council) 26 (47)	Lord Simon of Highbury (David Simon, Trade Minister and former chairman of BP) 46 (65)
Lord Stone of Blackheath (Andrew Stone, joint managing director of Marks and Spencer) 26 (47)	Lord Barberton (Tom Barberton, former Labour Party treasurer) 45 (50)
Lord Putnam (David Putnam, film producer) 27 (48)	Lord Hughes of Woodside (Robert Hughes, former transport spokesman) 45 (54)

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Mr and Mrs Allen are aged 48 and 47 and live in Liverpool. They have two children who are at school: James (13) and Sarah (16) who is entering the sixth form this year. Mr Allen is a policeman and Mrs Allen a college lecturer. The Allens are attracted to the flexibility of a Personal Choice Mortgage and the free remortgage package, because Mrs Allen is going to become self-employed and work from home providing special courses to senior students.

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Susan Oliver is aged 29 and single. She lives in Oxford and works as a freelance journalist. Susan intends studying for an MBA while continuing her work and is remortgaging her flat with a loan of £35,000 against a value of £65,000. She will raise capital of £10,000 with her Personal Choice Mortgage and use it to help fund her studies. The free remortgage package and flexibility were key factors in her decision to switch her mortgage to Bank of Scotland Mortgages Direct.

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Lewinsky 'made long visit to office of President'

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

A WHITE HOUSE guard has told the Washington grand jury that President Clinton ordered him to shut the door to the Oval Office when Monica Lewinsky visited, saying: "She'll be in here for a while".

Mr Clinton and the young trainee greeted each other with "Hi, Monica," and "Hi, Mr President," said Lewis Fox in his testimony, reported today by the magazine *US News and World Report*.

Mr Fox, a uniformed member of the Secret Service, was stationed outside the Oval Office on a weekend afternoon in the autumn of 1995.

He told the grand jury that Ms Lewinsky had not re-emerged from the office when his shift ended 40 minutes later. Other doors and windows to the Oval Office were locked and set with alarms.

Mr Fox's testimony contradicts Mr Clinton's description of his meetings with Ms Lewinsky given in his sworn deposition on January 17 in the Paula Jones sexual harassment case. Asked how long Ms Lewinsky stayed, he said: "It seems to me she brought things to me once or twice on the weekends. In that case, whatever time she would be in there, drop it off, exchange a few words and go."

Mr Fox, now retired, said that ten minutes before Ms Lewinsky arrived Mr Clinton opened the door to say that he was expecting her and to let her in. The White House has challenged Mr Fox's account.

Although Mr Fox gave his evidence in secret in February, it has leaked now as Kenneth Starr, the independent prosecutor, squares off against the Justice Department on whether he can compel serving Secret Service agents to testify to the grand jury. The Secret Service and the Justice Department want to protect the confidentiality of what agents observe.

In an odd twist to the case, the US Government, speaking through its Solicitor-General, seems at odds with the legal argument advanced by Mr Clinton in the civil suit brought by Mrs Jones.

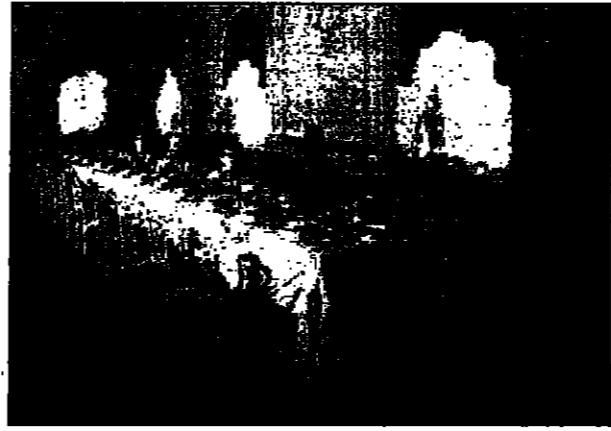
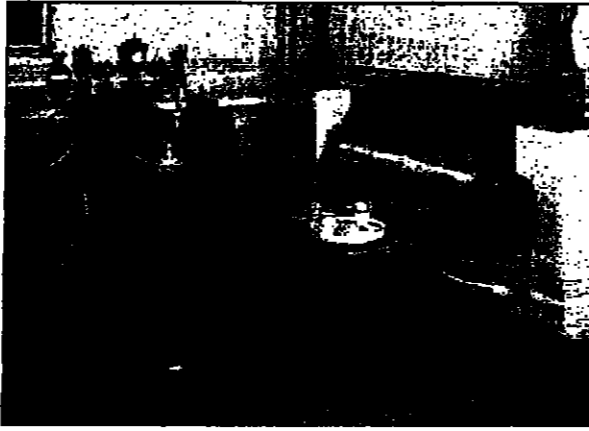
The Solicitor-General, Seth Waxman, has asked the Supreme Court to uphold a doctrine of sexual harassment that could help Mrs Jones's appeal against dismissal of her case. At issue is whether sexual overtures are enough to make a woman fear for her job or if she must prove direct retaliation or harm.

As a "friend of the court", the Solicitor-General supports a Chicago businesswoman whose appeal will be heard by the Supreme Court on Wednesday. She alleges that her superior made comments about her legs, said he could make life at the office difficult for her, asked her for sex and said he was reluctant to promote her when she refused. She was promoted in any case.

Mr Waxman's brief said the laws on sexual harassment were intended to strike at the entire spectrum of different treatment between men and women, not simply discrimination that caused tangible harm. However, Mrs Jones's case was dismissed by a judge in Arkansas because she had not suffered harm from Mr Clinton allegedly asking her for oral sex.



The main staircase in the Peterhof, above, the magnificent Russian imperial palace. Replicas of Alexander I's bedroom, below left, and Catherine the Great's dining room, below right, will feature in Las Vegas



Russian royal exhibits to vie with G-strings for attention

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LAS VEGAS

CULTURAL schizophrenia is coming to Las Vegas. Airlifted to Nevada direct from St Petersburg, what is being billed as the largest collection of historic objects ever to leave Russia is being displayed this year on two floors of a vast casino that is otherwise "themed" to evoke the Rio carnival.

The exhibition offers a prospect not even Peter the Great could have envisaged: his coronation throne set up 7,000 miles from home, flanked by 18th-century tapestries and unsmiling portraits of his descendants as cocktail waitresses circulate nearby in G-strings.



Peter the Great: his throne in a casino

"Treasures of Russia", drawn from the Romanovs' summer palaces at Peterhof, will also feature the night-shirt in which Peter I was murdered, the railway coach in which Nicholas II signed his abdication papers and a meticulous reconstruction of the white dining room in which Catherine the Great ate off Wedgwood porcelain with foreign dignitaries. "It is fair to say this is not a standard Las Vegas product," David Hanlon, of the Rio Hotel and Casino, said. Nor is it a product that will be seen anywhere else. The exhibition's 1,150 priceless artefacts will spend next winter yards from the Ipanema Bar and the Copacabana Showroom (and a five-minute cab ride from the Strip). Then they will go back to Russia.

It is fair to say this is not a standard Las Vegas product?

The hotel has secured exclusive rights to the collection with an undisclosed grant towards restoring the Peterhof's treasures. Pressed on why he had chosen the Rio, Dr Vadim Znamenov, of the Peterhof state museum, said that it was "the only place

that could afford to host a show this big". Dr Znamenov entered the showroom for a press conference on Thursday preceded by Tchaikovsky's *Violin Concerto* and followed by an American actor dressed as a Russian imperial guard. He had clearly given some thought to the aesthetic chaos that separates Russia's Versailles from America's steel-and-concrete gambling mecca. The Peterhof was more like Las Vegas than Versailles, he suggested with a straight face, because it was conceived as Russia's window on the world while the French original had been enclosed and was inward-looking.

In addition to the white dining room, the exhibition will boast full-scale reconstructions of Peter the Great's Monplaisir picture gallery and one of Alexander I's bedrooms, complete with a boat-shaped bed. Entrance will cost \$14 (£8.30) for adults, roughly twice what foreigners pay at the real Peterhof, but visitors should not feel they must dawdle to get their money's worth. The recommended viewing time is 45 minutes, or under three and a half minutes per gallery.

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Social Democrats crown Schröder but Kohl is still king

The German newspapers painted the Social Democratic Party congress at the weekend as a coronation Mass for Gerhard Schröder, the man chosen to challenge Helmut Kohl for the chancellorship.

You could see their point. Something of the magic of kingship has already passed to Herr Schröder. It used to be that when Herr Kohl left Bonn, the shutters came down and politics died. Now nobody notices much when he is abroad but a certain fizz descends the place if Herr Schröder is travelling.

Even party delegates at the Leipzig congress on Friday seemed in awe. Collectively, they are a surly bunch more

INSIDE GERMANY



BY ROGER BOYES

adept at dismantling leaders with late-night resolutions than at building up personalities. Individually, however, the delegates pranced and danced around Herr Schröder. Oskar Lafontaine be-

haved more like a tubby, ever-busy, ostentatiously loyal Lord Chamberlain than party chairman. The gossip behind the scenes was about who would (and who would not) become a member of the Schröder imperial court.

Only kings are crowned, however, and King Kohl has yet to be toppled.

What has changed is not the likelihood of Herr Schröder's accession but rather the relationship between the party and its candidate. It is this relationship rather than the over-optimistic opinion polls that has to be watched. Herr Schröder has stopped trying to be loved by the party. With the support of North Rhine-Westphalian

delegates, his grip on the party is sufficient. The party needs him; he does not have to bend over backwards any more to please it.

The Leipzig conference reminded me of a probably apocryphal story about Edward Shevardnadze when he was still a reformist Communist bigwig in the Soviet republic of Georgia. He called on the party leadership to vote for measures against corruption. All hands shot up. Those with two or more watches on their wrists were sacked. The similarity is this: the party has become a little nervous of Herr Schröder's robust desire for power.

The key to understanding the party's lack of self-confi-

dence is 1968. Germany has been quietly celebrating the anniversary of those student protests against the Springer press, against America, against monopoly capitalism, against an outdated university system. It was above all a generational struggle in which student leaders accused their fathers of hiding wartime pasts, of building deceit into the system.

Firebrands of that era run important parts of German society today. Most heads of regional broadcasting networks (the influential *Intendanten*) are "1968ers", as are many editors. The Social Democrats and the Greens are not only

led by that generation, they are managed by it.

So the winds of change should be gusting through Bonn. After all, the American President is also a "1968er". Herr Schröder and Rudolf Scharping, the parliamentary leader — are all former student rebels. All three hold views today that marry perfectly with those of the left of Herr Kohl's party. They happily dine with industrial bosses. Significantly, the three men lost their fathers early and had to work their way through university and support their invariably dotting mothers.

They were thus part of the rebellion but they did not fall into the easy category of middle-class rebels: their deepest wish was to be ac-

cepted by the leathery, crimson-faced chain smokers who pulled the strings of the Social Democratic Party.

That is why the party will opt for a conservative option after the September general election: for a grand coalition with a Christian Democratic party that dumps Herr Kohl, rather than a *hellerskeller* alliance with the Greens.

Who will broker this coalition? Herr Lafontaine, not Herr Schröder. Who will head such a government? Perhaps — it depends on the arithmetic — Wolfgang Schäuble, the Christian Democrat. The coronation of Herr Schröder, in other words, may be a long time coming.

Riviera serial killer claims eighth victim

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN GENOA

THE "Riviera serial killer", who has spread panic along the Italian Mediterranean coast by preying on lone women, claimed his eighth victim at the weekend.

A 32-year-old Italian woman was found shot dead in the locked lavatory of a train at Ventimiglia, on the Franco-Italian border. "Terror on the Riviera" ran the headline in yesterday's *Il Secolo XIX*, the Genoa newspaper. "A sick madman is on the loose — there is a macabre trail of corpses".

Police said the latest victim, named as Maria Angela Rubino, an office cleaner, had boarded the train on Saturday evening in Albenga, between Genoa and Ventimiglia.

Like the previous seven victims, she was shot in the back of the head, but not sexually molested. Last week police disclosed that Elisabeta Zoppietti, 32, a married nurse on holiday with her family at Chiavari, another Riviera resort near Genoa, had been murdered over the Easter weekend while returning to Milan by train. Like Signora Rubino, she was shot in the train's lavatory.

The previous six victims have all been prostitutes, most

of whom were killed while picking up clients on country roads in the hinterland behind the Riviera resorts. Police at first suspected a gangland feud involving the East European mafias which have taken over drugs and prostitution rackets on the spectacular and hitherto elegant and genteel Ligurian coast.

But Franco Greco, the prosecutor at Savona, who is coordinating the investigation, said there was "little doubt we are dealing with a single maniac. The killings all have his hallmarks — the same calibre pistol, the shooting in the back of the head".

He said the killer appeared to have a pass key to the train lavatories, which he was able to unlock to kill his victims and then lock again afterwards. "He fires through an article of clothing to muffle the noise, and probably waits until the train is in a tunnel."

On the palm-fringed seafront at Alasio, Albenga and other resorts, the *bagnini* (beach attendants) were yesterday beginning to rake the sand and repair beach huts before the summer season. But there was a chill of fear in the spring air, and hoteliers were worried about the impact



Rubino: shot in the back



of the killings on the annual influx of British, German and Swiss visitors.

Behind the Riviera towns' image of genteel decay lies a disturbing slide towards crime and squalor. At Albenga, a picturesque former Roman and medieval port,

Mgr Mario Oliveri, the bishop, said there had been "tensions" over illegal immigrants and prostitution. "But we have to remember why these problems arise. What we are witnessing is a tragic discrepancy between the wealth of the resorts and the poverty and degradation on which it feeds, which visitors rarely see".

Police were last night hunting for an Albanian gangster and pimp with a criminal record called Enea Prifti, who they believe may be able to shed light on the killings.

In his office Signor Greco has a map of the new Riviera underworld — "men, arms, and structures". The police have used telephone bugs to target known gang leaders such as Mr Prifti, some of whom deal in 38-calibre pistols of the kind used in the killings. But police increasingly think the "serial killer" may not be connected to the gangs. They note that the victims have all been killed at the same time, on holidays or weekends.

Andrea Santonastaso, commissioner of police at Pietra Ligure, issued a warning to women travelling alone. "The killer may well be a former prostitute's client who contracted AIDS and is seeking revenge on all women."



Silvio Berlusconi, the media magnate, celebrates after being formally elected president of the Forza Italia party at its first national congress in Assago

Thousands queue for rare glimpse of Turin Shroud

BY RICHARD OWEN

THOUSANDS of people queued outside Turin Cathedral yesterday for a two-minute glimpse of the Turin Shroud, revered by many as the burial cloth of Christ even though carbon-dating suggests that it is a medieval fake.

Organisers said they expected 50,000 visitors a day between now and mid-June, the first time that the shroud has been displayed publicly for 20 years.

Church officials said there had been complaints that the event was being commercialised, with souvenir stalls selling memorabilia in questionable taste, such as Holy Shroud scarves and T-shirts. Mgr Franco Peradotto, a retired bishop, said he was appalled. *Corriere della Sera* said: "This is the sort of thing which gives Mediterranean Catholicism a bad name."

In an editorial article, the newspaper criticised the Archbishop of Turin, Cardinal Giovanni Saldarini, for announcing that women who had had abortions and "all those who have contributed to abortions" could be absolved of sin by confession to any priest as a special dispensation during the period of the shroud's display.

Abortion is classed as a sin that normally results automat-

ically in excommunication, and only a bishop can readmit the offender to the Church after a lengthy procedure.

The shroud, measuring 14.5ft by 3.5ft, is covered in watermarks, stains and triangular patches, the result of wear and tear and mending after a series of fires over the centuries. On close inspection it shows the faint imprint of a man, bearded, long-haired, 5ft 10in tall, with the marks and blood stains of crucifixion and flogging on his head, hands and feet, all in accordance with the Gospel descriptions of the Crucifixion and Burial of Jesus.

The image came to light clearly only in 1898, in photographic negatives. Scientists are still unable to explain how the image was formed, how it could have been faked, or why it shows no signs of the corpse's decomposition.

Cardinal Saldarini said that the shroud was being shown "not to satisfy the curious, but as a solemn reminder full of impressive details of the Gospel accounts of the Passion of Jesus". He ruled out any further tests until after 2000. Microbiologists from Texas University have suggested that the carbon-14 tests conducted in 1988, which dated the shroud to between 1260 and 1390, were distorted by bacteria coating the cloth.

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Dissident freed in Beijing 'Spring'

Another young rebel is whisked out of jail and out of the country, reports James Pringle in Beijing

WANG DAN, the leading Chinese dissident and student leader from the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy demonstration, was released from prison and flown into exile in the United States yesterday, smoothing the way for a state visit to China by President Clinton in June.

The 29-year-old former history student at Beijing University, who was top of China's most wanted list after the violent suppression of the 1989 protest, was freed on medical parole at a time when observers believe China is experiencing a certain political relaxation leading to talk of a "new Beijing Spring".

Mr Wang was admitted to a hospital in Detroit on arrival last night. He was reported to be suffering from chronic headaches, searing stomach pain, long-term inflammation of the throat and a possible brain tumour.

The studious-looking, even seemingly timid Mr Wang, who used to organise informal salon discussions on campus on politics and philosophy — like many, Mr Wang was particularly angered over official corruption — had been sentenced to 11 years in jail on charges of plotting to overthrow the Government.

Mr Wang, seen as more level-headed than other pro-

testing students then, has been regarded as China's second leading dissident after the veteran human rights campaigner Wei Jingsheng, who spent 16 years in prison after calling for democracy in 1979. Mr Wei was freed last November and flown to America in a similar ritual to that of Mr Wang yesterday.

"This is coming to be quite a habit," said one foreign diplomat. "The Chinese seem to have developed a formula for whisking these dissidents out of jail and out of the country in as neat and thorough a way as possible."

Mr Wang is seen as a voice of the present generation, while Mr Wei spoke for an older generation that came to political maturity at the time of the Democracy Wall era, with its wall posters calling for more individual freedoms — a movement suppressed by the late Deng Xiaoping.

"A society still needs idealists — people who are willing to sacrifice themselves to uphold the basic ideals of freedom and democracy," Mr

Chinese authorities in the past have refused Mr Wang such parole, thinking he was not really sick and calling him a criminal. His release, diplomats said, clearly has a political dimension in terms of the Clinton visit, an event regarded by the Beijing leadership of key importance in establishing China's position in the world.

"The Chinese side does not want this summit to become bogged down in bickering over political detainees," said one foreign envoy here.

□ Santiago: The White House is "very pleased" by the Chinese Government's release of Mr Wang, said a spokesman travelling with President Clinton, who is here meeting hemispheric leaders at the Summit of the Americas.

In London, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, welcomed the release on behalf of the European Union. "His case is one of those which the EU has taken up with the Chinese," he said. "We hope there will be progress in other cases, too." (Reuters/AFP)



The parents of Wang Dan display a portrait of their son at their flat yesterday after the announcement of his release on medical parole. He was put immediately on a direct flight to Detroit for exile in the United States



Wang Dan during the Tiananmen Square protest

Texans 'back death penalty for children'

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

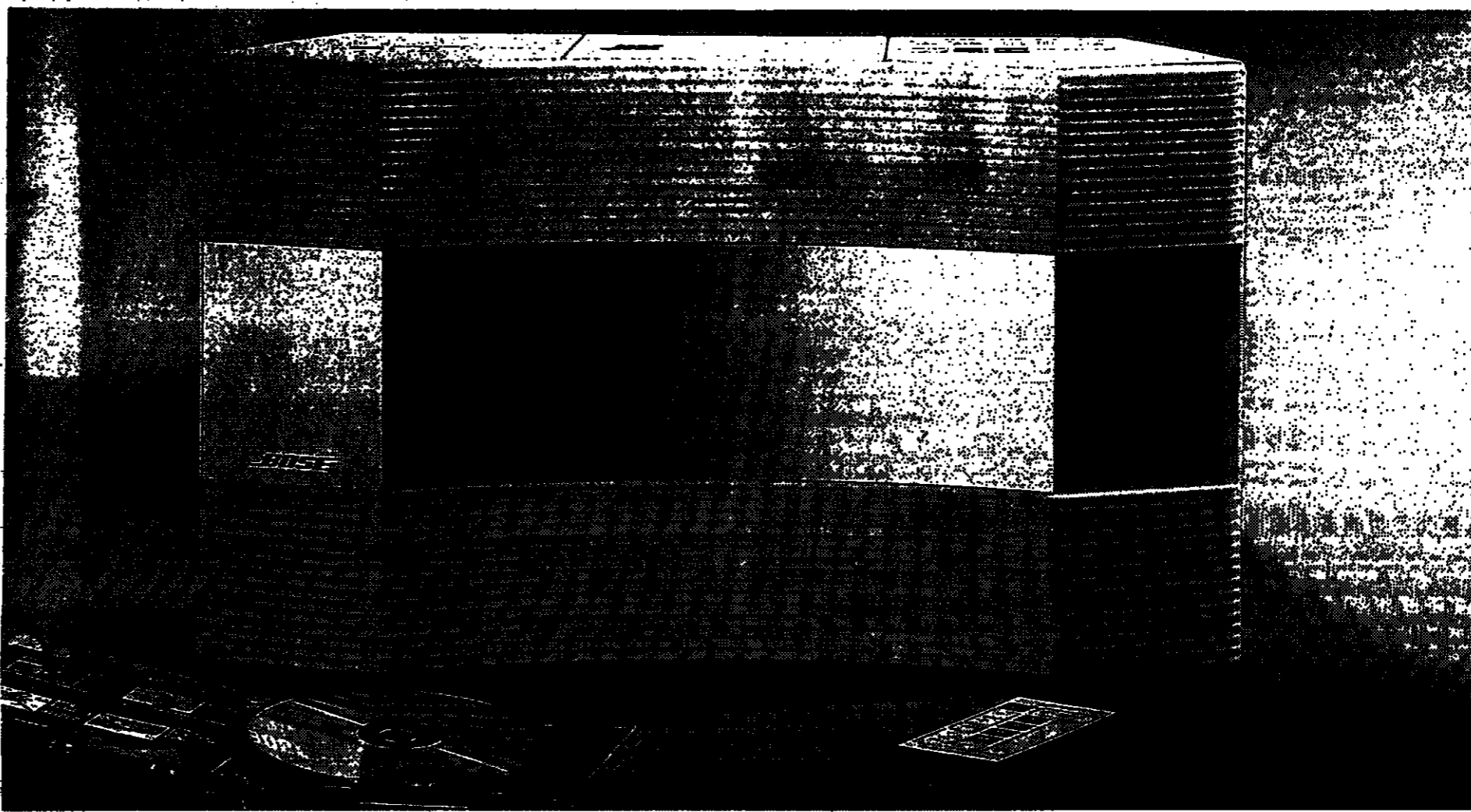
TEXAS Republican is claiming overwhelming support for a new law allowing 11-year-olds to face the death penalty.

Jim Pitts, 51, a lawyer and state assemblyman who has an 11-year-old son, says callers to his office back the idea by 65 to 35 per cent.

The proposal came less than a month after a shooting rampage by two young boys in Junesboro, Arkansas, and days after three boys raped and beat a three-year-old girl in Dallas, leaving her naked in a ditch. Making the death

penalty available for children would "send a message to our kids that they can't do these kinds of crimes", Mr Pitts said.

The proposed law has been dismissed by death penalty opponents and George Bush Jr, the Texas Governor, has distanced himself from the idea. But Mr Pitts has the backing of voters and politicians of both parties. In Texas, 37 people were executed last year — a state annual record since the US death penalty was reintroduced in 1976.



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Akihito: unhappy with his minders
Akihito insists on meeting ordinary Britons

BY ROBERT WHYMANT
JAPAN'S Emperor Akihito is asking to meet ordinary people, as well as royalty and officials when he visits Britain next month, palace insiders say. The request underlines the Emperor's discontent at the mishandling of his last overseas tour by the entourage of minders who dictate his every word and action. The Japanese Cabinet yesterday gave its formal assent to the two-week tour in which the Emperor and Empress Michiko will visit the United Kingdom, Portugal and Denmark.

During a six-day stay in Britain, starting May 25, the Emperor will be awarded the Order of the Garter by the Queen, lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Westminster Abbey, and make a day trip to Cardiff with the Empress.

The Queen will host a banquet at Buckingham Palace, and the imperial couple will reciprocate with a banquet at the Victoria and Albert Museum. The Emperor, a keen marine biologist, will also call on the Linnaean Society and the Zoological Society.

The Emperor has instructed palace officials to ensure there are opportunities to meet "British people from all walks of life", said a senior member of the court.

The Emperor's efforts to revive public interest in the monarchy has been held in check by the Imperial Household Agency and its smooty clique of bureaucrats dedicated to preserving the throne's mystique.

Something snapped last summer when the imperial couple visited Brazil. The Emperor was anxious to meet and talk to Brazilians, especially those of Japanese descent. Instead, Foreign Ministry and palace officials had arranged for him to make 17 speeches in a ten-day visit packed with formal engagements that left Akihito exhausted and the Empress feverish.

The career prospects of some very important bureaucrats depend on the British visit being rated an unqualified success.

Yeltsin 'fishing trip' to Tokyo nets investment

PRESIDENT Yeltsin of Russia caught two fish yesterday and the Japanese Prime Minister landed none, a fitting metaphor for a summit that netted Russia the promise of Japanese cash without any apparent concessions in a divisive territorial dispute.

The fishing trip came at the end of two days of talks at the seaside resort of Kawana that deepened the two leaders' personal relationship but left unanswered how the dispute over Russian-held islands claimed by Japan can be resolved. Exuding bonhomie at a joint press conference, Mr Yeltsin and Ryutaro Hashimoto said that their summit had brought closer the prospect of the two countries signing a peace treaty: formally they are still engaged in the Second World War.

In Saturday's round of talks, Mr Yeltsin proposed that the two countries should sign a wider agreement than a simple peace treaty. Yesterday Mr Hashimoto countered with his own idea, which was not disclosed.

"This morning Ryu [Mr Hashimoto] laid out a new proposal which we must think

Russia's gains were not matched by concessions to Japan, Robert Whyment writes

about." Mr Yeltsin said on the lawn of the Kawana Hotel. "But I feel very optimistic about it."

The Japanese side had hoped that the informal summit would advance talks to forge a peace treaty by tackling the territorial question. A treaty has been delayed for more than 50 years by Japan's demand that Russia must hand back four islands off Hokkaido captured by Soviet forces in the closing days of the war.

The return of the islands, known as the Southern Kuriles in Russia, has always been a matter of honour for Japan. But Tokyo switched to a more conciliatory approach last year, proposing to provide economic support to Russia

while dealing more flexibly with the timing and terms of the return of its "Northern Territories".

At their informal summit in Krasnoyarsk last November, the two leaders agreed to work towards concluding a peace treaty by 2000, while making efforts to settle the dispute over the islands. That agreement reflected the concern of Russia and Japan to build up their relationship as a counterweight to Chinese influence. Mr Yeltsin, embroiled in a battle with his parliament over Sergei Kiriyenko, his candidate for Prime Minister, flew to Japan to fish for the Japanese assistance and investment he requires to support market reforms.

The President, appearing relaxed and energetic, appeared satisfied with the catch from his brief expedition to Japan. "There will be a substantive economic strategic partnership," he said.

Mr Hashimoto said that the two countries will set up a joint economic fund to help channel Japanese investment into Russia. A Japanese government mission will visit Moscow next month to begin discussions on the fund, Mr Hashimoto said. The possibility of building a Japanese car plant in Russia was also discussed as well as the development of energy resources in the Russian Far East and Siberia. On Saturday, Japan said that it would extend to Russia a \$356 million instalment of an untied \$890 million loan already agreed.

Focusing on economic and political co-operation, the two leaders sought to play down the territorial dispute. But Mr Yeltsin dangled a solution of the decades-old row before the Japanese as a bait for lucrative economic deals.

Both men were at their most jovial during the talks. Japanese feel uncomfortable at public displays of affection, but a blushing Mr Hashimoto yielded to Mr Yeltsin's effusive bear hugs with good grace.



Naina Yeltsin, the President's wife, is applauded for her efforts yesterday on a Japanese harp



President Yeltsin squeezes his way through the entrance to a restaurant yesterday, with the assistance of Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, right

WORLD IN BRIEF

Death for genocide priests

Kigali: A court in Rwanda sentenced to death two Roman Catholic priests at the weekend for the killing of 2,000 Tutsis and for organising the slaughter of another 60 during the 1994 massacres. More than 26,000 genocide suspects are in Rwandan prisons, according to the United Nations. (Reuters)

Nazi victims

Croats in Croatia and Poland paid homage to victims of Nazi wartime persecution. Jerzy Buzek, Poland's Prime Minister, and President Tudjman of Croatia, joined the tributes. (AFP/Reuters)

120 police held

Paris: The Algerian authorities arrested 120 policemen on charges of human rights abuses, according to Justice Ministry officials. They were accused of killings and abuse of power. (Reuters)

Guerrilla attack

Phnom Penh: Khmer Rouge guerrillas killed 21 people in an attack on a riverside fishing settlement in central Cambodia, the Interior Ministry said. Twelve Vietnamese were among the dead. (Reuters)

Crush kills four

Harare: Four people died as football fans, trying to get into a packed stadium for a free match between Zimbabwe's most popular teams, Dynamos and Highlanders, caused a stampede. (AP)

Austrian victor

Vienna: President Klesill of Austria, 65, was comfortably re-elected for a second six-year term, according to exit polls quoted by the ORF public television network as voting booths closed. (AFP)

Fatal snowball

Berne: A nine-year-old Swiss boy died after being crushed by a giant snowball, police said. He had made it with his brother, five, and tried to stop it rolling away by putting himself in its path. (AFP)

Clinton offers \$45bn to help Latin America fight poverty

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

THE Clinton Administration yesterday announced a \$45.6 billion (£27 billion) package of loans for Latin America and the Caribbean as part of a three-year effort to tackle regional problems of poverty and education, and to build democracy and free trade.

The announcement came at the hemispheric Summit of the Americas in Santiago, the Chilean capital. The 34 heads of state — minus Cuba — were meeting for their second summit in four years, designed to bring the region closer to creating a Free Trade Area of the Americas by 2005.

Latin American leaders have forged a number of trade pacts, but progress towards the regional free trade goal has been slowed by concern in the United States that opening up trade means competition from cheap labour in Latin America with resulting loss of jobs at home.

The US Congress has denied Mr Clinton authority to press ahead with free trade negotiations on a "fast track", but the President reiterated his commitment at the weekend to

the free trade talks. Regional negotiations are due to get under way in Miami in June.

To offset growing concern about the region's fundamental problems of poverty, Washington appears ready to loosen its purse strings by freeing up international loan money. But critics say the Clinton Administration is being less generous than it would appear since the money is from already approved funds that have simply been reassigned.

Analysts also say that whatever democratic and economic progress have been achieved in the region lately are being steadily undermined by con-

tinued poverty, rising crime and corruption. According to one recent poll funded by the European Union and the Inter-American Development Bank, 65 per cent of Latin Americans are dissatisfied with the state of democracy in their countries.

The crisis of confidence has opened the door to former military coup leaders who are trying to make a comeback in Venezuela and Paraguay. Elsewhere, constitutional limits on power are under threat in Peru, Panama, Brazil and Argentina where the Presidents are seeking reforms to allow them to stand for re-

election. More than 30 per cent of Latin Americans — 210 million people — live in poverty, and the region has the most unequal distribution of wealth in the world.

Latin America has also recently won another unflattering title, as the most violent region on earth: it has an average of 30 murders per 100,000 inhabitants, six times the world average and three times higher than the US.

El Salvador recently passed Colombia as the most murderous country in the world, with more killings per year than during the height of its bloody civil war.

Violent crime is "the principle barrier to regional economic development," according to the Inter-American Development Bank. The bank estimates that it cost \$168 billion annually, or 14 per cent of the region's gross national product.

"The fruits of summity cannot be gathered and enjoyed if other issues are not addressed," said Jerry Haar, a trade expert at the University of Miami.



Fonda: "My comments were inaccurate"

Fonda sorry for Georgia starvation slur

Washington: Jane Fonda has apologised for telling the United Nations that children were starving to death in her adopted state of Georgia. (Tom Rhodes writes).

She swiftly drew a chorus of anger and ridicule from the people of Georgia and Zell Miller, its Governor, who said that the view from Ms Fonda's penthouse in Atlanta was "perhaps not as clear as it needs to be". She said: "I apologise to Governor Miller and the people of Georgia. My comments were inaccurate and ill-advised."

Dispute grows over export of US guns

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

A TRANSATLANTIC row is brewing over US guns exported to Britain and Europe. American officials fear these are then re-exported and end up in war zones or being used by organised crime.

The State Department was reported yesterday to be on the verge of revoking all outstanding licences for firearms exports to Britain. Some 250 licences for more than 14,000 handguns were said to be involved, according to a report from the US Embassy in London.

Clinton Administration officials are also considering whether to revoke the pending licences of all EU firearms companies as part of a major effort to stem the illicit movement of arms through what they call a "European Union loophole", according to *The New York Times*.

Thousands of high-powered and semi-automatic American pistols and rifles sold to Europe in recent years were said to have ended up fuelling violence in Rwanda, parts of former Yugoslavia, Algeria and Turkey. There were also indications that American

guns had found their way to Iran and Iraq.

President Clinton will present the US proposals during a session on crime at the Group of Eight (G8) summit, which brings together leading industrial nations and Russia beginning in Birmingham on May 15.

After meetings in London of the G8's subgroup on firearms, the embassy reported to Washington that the US "should be concerned that firearms are not remaining in the countries for which they are licensed". A cornerstone of US policy was not being supported by EU policy, according to the embassy.

American law requires foreign purchasers of firearms and military equipment to sign a statement that they will not re-export them without State Department approval. Under EU law, however, there is no requirement that a company wishing to re-export them to another of the 15 member countries must notify the country where the weapons first originated. The EU regards such a ruling as an infringement of sovereignty.

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Gestures speak so clearly

Actions are as important as words in conversation, says Anjana Ahuja

When you next regale a friend with an anecdote, recount the story using hand gestures that do not correspond to your tale. Then ask your friend to recall what you've said. If a study at Chicago University is correct, his or her account will probably match the story you outlined with your actions, not the one you told with your voice. It is a vivid illustration of the truism that actions speak louder than words.

This shows, says Professor Justine Cassell, from the Media Laboratory at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), that hand movements accompanying speech are as crucial as the speech itself. For example, if you are relating a tale featuring two people, using a different hand to depict each person helps the listener to understand. But if the two characters become mixed up, the listener can become confused.

Professor Cassell, trained in psychology and linguistics, is an expert on the art of interpreting the language of hand movements. She believes that as technologists try to develop agents (computer-generated characters) that can communicate in more human ways, the significance of body language should not be overlooked. "Most computer scientists don't realise that conversa-

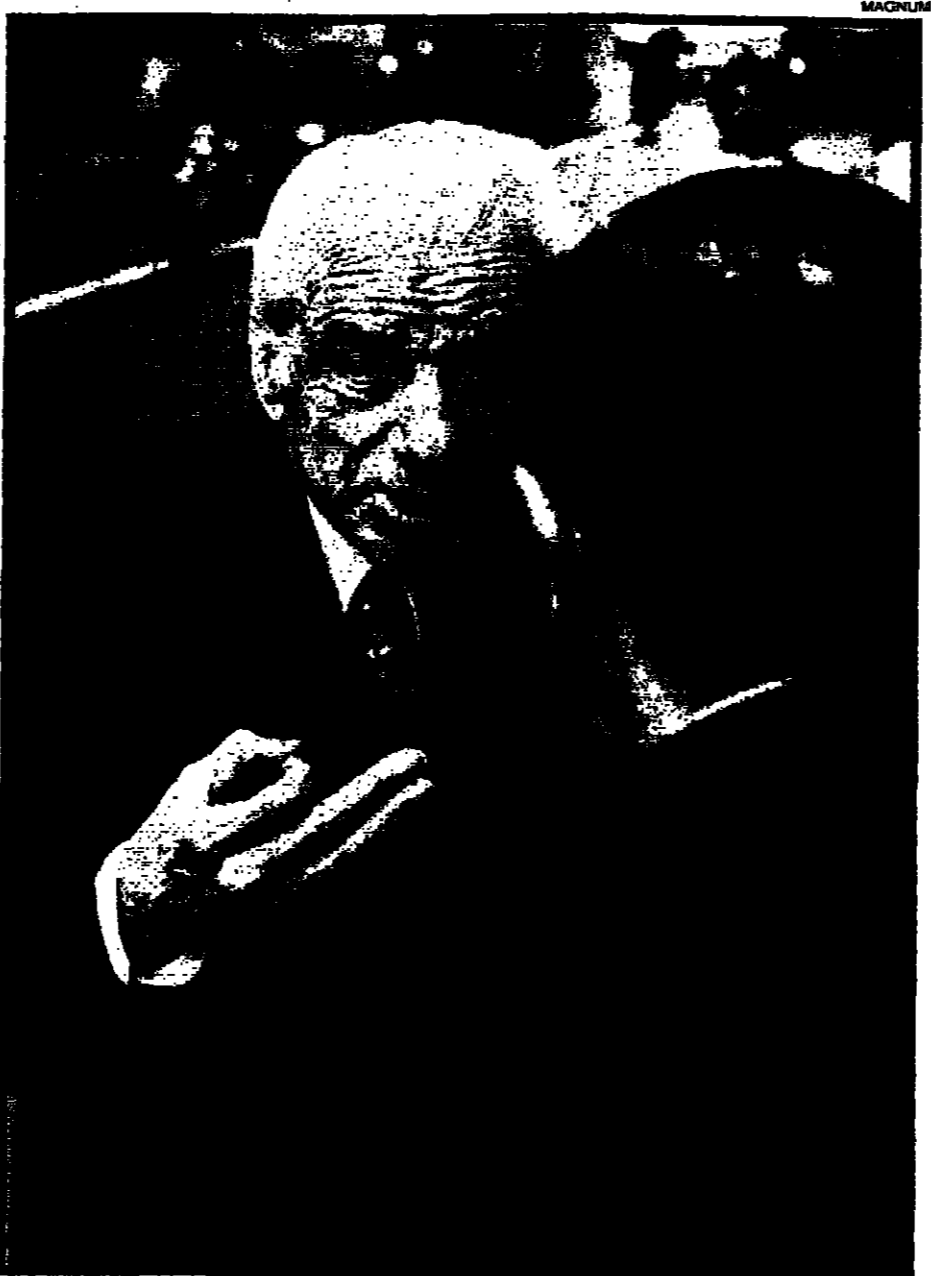
tions between people are not just about conveying information," she says. "They establish a relationship. If we want our characters to be like humans, they need to establish a social bond with the user. We have to make them look and act like real people, so we must include hand gestures and facial expressions. They need to know when to speak, when to listen, and when to take turns."

In response to this, Professor Cassell and her team have created Rea, a virtual estate agent, who will be unveiled this summer at a meeting of the American Association of Artificial Intelligence.

The language of the hands crops up in every culture, and shares a universal grammar. Speech-related gestures fall into four types. *Iconics* are air pictures, such as the actions used in charades to indicate a book, film or play. *Metaphors* are used to represent abstract concepts — an example is the pinching action used to indicate precision.

Deixics are pointing actions, used to indicate where something is. *Beats* are small hand waves that we use, along with vocal intonation, to indicate which bits of our speech are important or insignificant.

All are used in very specific circumstances — random gestures look idiotic, and are rather difficult to do. Likewise,



Signs and gestures are an integral part of human communication

using none at all looks unnatural. It takes only a brief study of human conversation to show how we employ actions in a predictable and subconscious way. We resort to iconics when we do not know, or cannot retrieve, the right word. In one experiment, subjects who were asked to retell a story involving an electric tram, invariably used hand gestures to describe the pantograph, the wire that connects the car to the overhead power cable.

Actions are prevalent when the speaker is imparting new information. This predictability has allowed researchers to encode hand gestures and feed them into computer programs, in order to simulate human beings in cyberspace.

While she was working with Professor Norman Badler at the Centre for Human Modelling at Pennsylvania University, Professor Cassell created Gilbert and George, two computer characters designed to speak and move their hands about unscripted. They could also convey facial expressions. In terms of replicating human behaviour, they were less than authentic. Unsurprisingly, the hand gestures were primitive and robotic. Facial expressions were even more confusing — the nods of acknowledgement between Gilbert and George became unstoppable, dizzying bobs, while their eyebrows twitched into a frenzy.

By videotaping conversations between real people, Professor Cassell hit on why Gilbert and George looked so odd: "When we convey information, we can do it through speech, facial expression and hand gestures, and we strike a delicate balance between them. But Gilbert and George used all three, which is why they looked so manic."

Professor Cassell, who moved to MIT, decided to "take the architecture to pieces and start again". The result was Rea, a "conversational humanoid", incarnated as a female estate agent capable of talking in real time to the user. Professor Cassell says: "She has a face and a body, and can generate language and hand gestures. She can interact with humans, and she nods when she understands. She can guide you through houses pointing out the best features."

Rea has a video system that observes the user, allowing her to respond to the air-waving, grimaces and grins of the user. The idea of humanising a computer may seem alarming but, says Professor Cassell, people find Rea engaging.

Professor Badler is less certain about endowing computers with personalities. The most immediate application, he thinks, is in teaching. "Virtual people can be used to train real people in tasks that

are difficult, dangerous or costly," he says. His group at Pennsylvania University has designed MediSim, a virtual medic that shows the user how to perform emergency medical procedures. "MediSim drew a good response because it showed the details of procedures," Professor Badler says. "A virtual medic that just waves its arms and talks to you is not as useful."

Professor Cassell agrees with this, but adds that virtual people could introduce computers to those left behind by technology. She says: "A social agent that looks, sounds and acts like a real human could open that world up to people who are not literate or who are non-specialists. Computers have been a closed domain for so long, and people like Rea could change that."

Plant genes Chemotherapy Finding food

Built-in antifreeze

EASTER weekend's snow and frost was bad news for farmers, catching their fruit trees in blossom. In March a similar cold snap swept across America, doing about \$200 million (£124 million) in damage to peaches, strawberries, blueberries and other crops.

There is little that farmers can do to protect crops against late frosts, but genetic engineering is coming to their aid. Some years ago scientists managed to engineer a plant containing a gene from the Arctic flounder, a fish that can survive in sub-zero seas using its own antifreeze.



SCIENCE BRIEFING Nigel Hawkes

Although ingenious, this process involved putting an animal gene into a plant, which many critics of genetic engineering regard as a step too far. A new development, reported in *Science* earlier this month, is likely to be more acceptable because it simply manipulates the plant's own genes to make it more frost-hardy.

All plants contain genes, perhaps as many as 25, that control their response to cold weather. At first sight, this appears to make genetic engineering difficult but, a few years ago, several teams found that all these cold-regulated genes were turned on by the same protein, which acts as a central switch.

Dr Michael Thomashow and colleagues at Michigan State University found the gene for this switch, or transcription factor. He realised that if he could devise a way of keeping the switch permanently on, it might

improve cold-hardiness. Using *Arabidopsis*, a weedy plant that is the plant geneticist's favourite guinea-pig, he attached the gene to a sequence in the plant's genome which ensures that it will be continuously active; then he put it back into the plant. The result was a plant that constantly produced cold-tolerance proteins. Experiments also showed that its leaves could be frozen and thawed with far less damage.

The benefit comes when there is a sudden drop in temperature, the kind of cold snap that tends to do the worst damage. Normal plants frozen at 5C for two days are killed but, given a chance to adapt to this temperature over a five-day period, they do much better. The modified plants, whose cold genes are on all the time, survived without an acclimatisation period.

The evidence is that similar cold-tolerance genes exist in important crops, and evidence of how they work is starting to emerge. Dr Farhat Sarhan, of the University of Quebec, Canada, working with wheat, has found that the proteins protect cell membranes against the damage done by freezing.

The proteins appear to fill the space left by water when it freezes and so protect the membrane from damage. Dr Sarhan told *Science* that his evidence suggested that wheat had a master switch, just like that in *Arabidopsis*. He has not yet found it, but he believes it is on wheat chromosome five.

Ice-cream acts as decoy in cancer war



CANCER chemotherapy can save lives but, as is generally known, it is no fun. The treatment causes nausea and vomiting and about a quarter of patients begin to feel ill as soon as they go through the clinic door. In this classic example of Pavlovian conditioning, known as anticipatory nausea, they suffer the side-effects before they have even taken the drugs.

Professor Geoffrey Hall, of the University of York, has used rats to study the phenomenon, and found that it is diminished if the animals are given a second stimulus at the same time. This stimulus, an unusual flavour, seems to mask the first, preventing the conditioning.

The flavour acts as a "scapegoat", since the animal seems to blame it for feeling ill. The technique might also work on human beings, he told *Wellcome News*, the magazine of the Wellcome Trust, which supports his research. "Children could be given an ice-cream when they go for chemotherapy. They will then blame feeling ill on the flavour. The ice-cream will act as a scapegoat, reducing their conditioning to the clinic."

Screeches summer bats to go hunting



THE greater spear-nosed bat, a cave-dweller found in the subtropics, emits a penetrating screech as it flies around. A study by two zoologists from the University of Maryland shows that it serves the same function as the huntman's horn, summoning other bats from roost to join the search for food.

Dr Gerald Wilkinson and Dr Janet Wenrick Boughman recorded on video bats going in and out of a cave in Trinidad, and found that screeches occurred more often when the bats were in groups than when they were alone.

When a female called, another tended to join her; and when females were netted at feeding sites miles from the cave, it transpired that they came from the same roost. When recordings of the screeches were played back, they attracted other bats.

Why should bats search for food in a pack? They are unrelated, so it cannot be a case of ensuring the survival of their own genes. In *Animal Behaviour*, the zoologists argue that the pack makes it easier to defend feeding sites, high in the balsa trees, from other bats.

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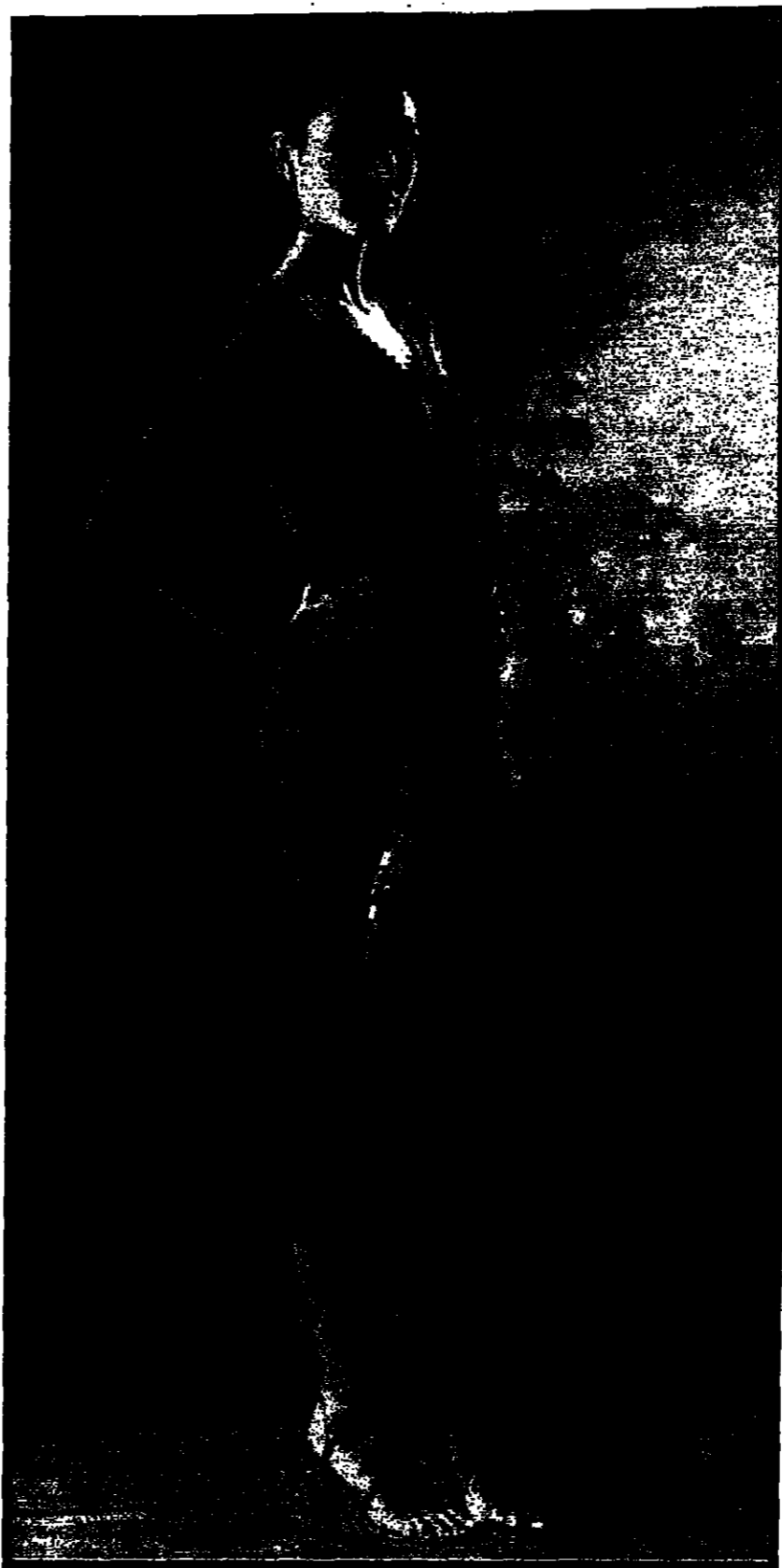
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Red, gold and yellow patterned knitted dress, £340, by Kenzo, 15 Sloane Street, London SW1 (0171-235 4021). Butterfly in hair, £2.50, from Basia Zarzycka, as before



Black dress with fringed hem, £60, by Warehouse, available nationwide. Jet beaded necklace from £265 by Basia Zarzycka, as before. Red silk ruffled wrap, £695, by Neisha Crosland, available from Basia Zarzycka

Photographer: SANAL. Stylist: Nicola Goldie. Hair: Flavien Abbas at Michaeljohn Management. Make-up: Jochen Fuchs at Michaeljohn Management. Model: Gora at Select

Grace Bradberry, Style Editor, is swept away by a Mexican wave inspired by Frida Kahlo

Frida Kahlo, the Mexican artist, contracted polio at the age of six and was the victim of a horrific bus accident when she was 18. Not a very promising start for a fashion icon, you might think, but Kahlo overcame these misfortunes to become one of the great inspirations for modern designers. Not that this was her intention. For her, painting served as a catharsis for pain and had nothing to do with the source of next season's collection. She

died in 1954, just after her 47th birthday, and so missed out on the notion that fashion might be art, or that it might be about something deeper than looking beautiful. Nevertheless, Kahlo is up there in the pantheon of great fashion icons, alongside the Empress Josephine and Bianca Jagger. This season it was Jean Paul Gaultier and Christian Lacroix who fell for the seductive combination of sex, death and ethnic adornment that Kahlo brought to her famous self-

portraits. It is not just the paintings but also the life that give her such a potent hold over the imaginations of designers. Married to Diego Rivera, the Mexican muralist, Kahlo conducted a string of affairs — with women as well as men. Her self-portraits express a certain androgyny, with not only her eyebrows but also her moustache being over-dramatised. Perhaps not surprisingly, the latter detail did not make it to the catwalk; the world of fashion may love the whole man/woman thing, but there are limits, and the hirsute woman's time has yet to come.

Gaultier's take on Kahlo is the more modern of the two. Some called it "Frida Kahlo meets Che Guevara", and as well as the vibrant peasant skirts there were full trousers in navy and tobacco, and tops printed with religious imagery. The evening-wear was gorgeous — layers of ruffled tulle and long satin "fiesta" skirts.

The new drama in fashion is an act that we should all be getting in on after the conformism that has preceded it, but it is a tricky act to carry off. Your references should be in footnotes rather than on banners. A touch of fringing, an ethnic print, a vibrant colour — any one of these could catch the mood. At the same time the ariness of a Kahloesque flower print can offset the English-haystack feel of ruffling, smocking and drawstrings, three of the season's key trends.

Feather boas are now on their way out as hot accessories. On its way in is the dramatic shawl, and the Neisha Crosland one shown here would be a red rag to any bull. Gladiatorial, ankle-wrapping stilettos are another pugnant trend in a season that is feminine, but with a hefty kick behind it.

If you do nothing else, at least stick a butterfly in your hair — and get a beaded bag.

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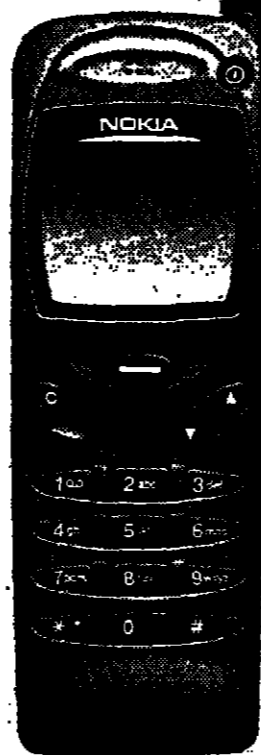
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Ben Elton has joined a growing line of notables from the arts world who are attacking a Government which they feel has already fallen too far below their expectations. There are arguments on the Government's side, but they are hard to make at a time of constrained budgets, inherited deterioration and strategy plans which are necessarily long-term. But the Government of Tony Blair and the department headed by Chris Smith have more of a case — I think, risking the bullets of my friends — than they are given credit for, especially with regard to Elton's argument.

He criticises the Government's use of the phrase "Cool Britannia" and from this he whips the Government for concentrating more on style than on substance. How that stands up after Northern Ireland and a radically intelligent Budget I do not know, but let that pass. *Cool Britannia*, by the way, was the title of a series of documentaries about young Brit-

The bit of politics that led Ben Elton astray

ish artists produced by LWT Arts for Channel 4, a series highly successful in bringing new and remarkable talents to the screen. It may be Ben Elton who is confusing style with substance. For what "Cool Britannia" — which began as fun and soon, I agree, plummeted into a meaningless mantra — signalled was a desire to tell Britain, as George Orwell would say, the way it is. Incidentally, the Old Etonian Orwell, Labour's thinking conscience, and Blair would, I suspect, have a great deal more in common than just their surnames: decency, for instance, is a key word for both Blairs.

The Government is surely saying that there is a Britain which is not only beateaters and country houses and Black Rod walking backwards and villages deter-

mined never to go forwards, but also a place where young people rave through Saturday night to the best dance music in the world; where inventions still tumble out (although too often they are pirated away from us); where computer penetration in schools gathers pace — where, above all, there is a growing number of younger people happy and easy in a post-imperial democracy. In short, the Government wants to emphasise newness and change. Not to fabricate it, because it is already here. Not to give it precedence, because this is a Government sensible of tradition. But to give it a profile. To give it the oxygen of approval. To blow away the loving cobwebs. To show Britain itself that this is what is happening now. There is no doubt of this Government's belief that the only



rich future is one which embraces the new. That is also the philosophy from Silicon Valley to Sydney. The 21st century will surely see an explosion of change when the three

great 20th-century revolutions — the quantum, the biomolecular and the computer — mesh together and transform work, wealth and play. We need to be at that party. But in this country to wave a flag for the new is to wave a red rag. I am not suggesting that Elton is a bull: I like him a lot and respect his prodigious output enormously. But an attempt to change the perception of our culture, which is what this Government is up to, needs to be appreciated as much as criticised.

The Prime Minister is sending out a new message and it is bound to be raw and stumble a little in its first steps. The problem, I think, is that as a country we have become rather proud of our resistance to the new. Most people who can afford a wider choice of housing do not build new places but look for

old, the older the better. In a country stacked with strong traditional arts, the new has to bulldoze its way in.

Our past is very fine and very secure and we are proud of it and sometimes over-attached to it. Blair is right: it is no good for the future if the image of Britain is irredeemably fustian. And Elton of all people knows how vital an image can be. As the multiplicity of television channels grows, image will be a crucial part of any success.

It is far too easy to bypass Olde Britain with the excuse that it prefers to be a happy little village undisturbed by the heavy traffic of the future. Although that holds great truth for me and for others it will be of very little use for our children and their children. The

relentless promotion of the greatness of the past could become like a burden of debt around their necks. "Cool Britannia" has had a short shelf-life — so what? Again, Elton knows better than most what a brief candle most catchphrases are. The substance of this Government's attempt to realise change does not hang on the slender thread of that phrase.

I suspect that Elton has seen a tempting opening and yielded. I was at a one-man show of his in London before the last election and he laid into the new Labour Party even then. A new target had appeared and he is very good at hitting new targets. Elton is no stranger to what is new, but this is one target which I think he misses. Still, it gives him his edge. He knows that substance often struggles for a style when new ambitions arrive. Forget "Cool Britannia" by all means. But new Labour is delivering on the new — and knocking the odd slogan is rather old hat.

CATHERINE ASHMORE

Step on deck for a taste of America

Allen Robertson talks to the choreographer with a firm hand on the tiller of the new *Show Boat*

With a cast larger than *Cats* and *Chicago* put together, *Show Boat* is a glorious spectacle, a great big juicy celebration of Americana through song and dance. There have been other productions in London before, but never has dance played such a central role as it does in Harold Prince's Broadway staging, which opens in the West End next week.

It is Susan Stroman's snappy and inventive choreography which gives this production its edge. The Jerome Kern Estate granted her permission to delve into the original score and pull out some of Kern's early orchestrations. The first production clocked in at four hours plus, so there was plenty of deleted material to be explored. With access to the complete original score, Stroman and Prince came up with a staging that uses dance as its basis.

"This production is directed in a cinematic way," says Stroman. "There are no blackouts between the scenes. We keep it going forward through the dancing."

Stroman's track record is impressive. A decade ago, and then unknown, she created a stir on both sides of the Atlantic with her award-winning dances in the Gershwin compilation show, *Crazy For You*. *Show Boat* confirmed her reputation as Broadway's leading choreographer. Not content with working on one show at a time, Stroman is also beavering away on Trevor Nunn's new staging of

Oklahoma! which opens at the National Theatre on July 6. And if that weren't enough, she is also creating a show for New York this autumn and planning yet another Broadway musical for the season after that.

"I wanted to be a choreographer ever since I was a little girl," she says. "Probably since before I could even spell it." But the history of musicals isn't exactly littered with distaff dance-makers. Only one other, Agnes de Mille, was ever a force, and it was with *Oklahoma!* that de Mille was transformed into Broadway's first female powerbroker.

Stroman is well aware that she is a high roller in what is traditionally a man's world. "In the beginning I had to do my hair up in a tight bun and wear business suits. In order to get up the ladder I had to take another persona, because people who didn't know me would take one look at this little blonde thing and think: 'This girl couldn't possibly be strong enough to be in charge.'" So I had to convince everybody that I could be a professional. Since *Crazy For You* I'm happy to say I've been able to let my hair down. But even today, when you find yourself sitting around a production table it is often six other men and me." She pauses, then breaks out into raucous laughter over her Freudian slip. "Ha! I guess I'm just one of the boys."

This is the fourth West End production of *Show Boat* since 1928. The show was a milestone, a landmark in the



Invitation to the dance: the choreographer Susan Stroman (in baseball cap) demonstrates a few riverboat shuffles to the cast of Harold Prince's staging of *Show Boat*

history of the Broadway musical. With a plot that spans 50 years from 1890, the expansive story travels from the levees of the Mississippi to the Chicago World's Fair and back again. In turn, the score ranges from gospel to blues, from ragtime to opera. Grand in its sweep, *Show Boat* is nothing less than the encapsulation of the American Dream. "It is about family, about forgiveness," says Stroman, "a panorama of America growing and changing — struggling, hurting and ultimately healing."

Put together at record speed by Kern and Oscar Hammerstein, *Show Boat* was on Broadway only a year after the huge Edna Ferber novel was published. The show's anthem, *Ol' Man River*, has become one of the most famous songs ever penned. And

most people are able to hum along with another half dozen *Show Boat* melodies.

But Stroman and her colleagues are not playing some nostalgic "name that tune" game. "You have to think of it as if it's brand new. That's certainly what we're doing with *Oklahoma!*, which is also about the building of a new America. On the surface it might seem to be a show about who gets the right picnic basket, but it's really much more than that. It's about a time when everyone had the right to dream. I agree with Trevor Nunn when he says that the most important line in the show is when Aunt Eller says, 'I may not be better than anybody else, but I'll be damned if I ain't just as good.' I think everybody can relate to that."

Currently in preview, *Show Boat* opens at the Prince Edward Theatre (0171-447 5400) on April 28

Dissecting the cerebral vortex

Did you hear the one about the therapist, the software author, the contract killer, the conceptual artist and God? That might sound like a set-up for a satirical gag, but when these troubled souls share the stage in *The Electrocution of Children*, Chris Lee's millennial worry-bead of a drama, it is no joking matter.

Lee is a London-based mental health worker and his drama is dominated by images of therapy, mental disintegration and sanity under siege. Margot (Olwen Fouere), a doctor undergoing a crisis of faith in medicine, is making scant progress with her therapist. By contrast, her relationship with a patient (Robert Price), who would like her to

kill his father and then have sex, is progressing rapidly. Dwelling far beyond the reach of therapy is Angela (Catherine Mack), a bratty photographer having a hard time shifting work from her latest show. Luckily, when a pair of feuding software authors (Chris McHale and Andrew Beckett) stumble upon her images of screaming mouths, she manages both to find a date and sell a picture.

The show opens with a small video monitor on which God (Renku Setna) makes cynical remarks about the role of chance in the survival of the

human race. Not that our survival much worries this *realpolitik* omnipotence. Bacteria, his main concern, will weather just about any astronomical catastrophe. "Complexity is of no interest to me."

Lee's human beings seem little more interested in each other's fate. Even their intimate confessions are pulverised by the sort of cynical energy that drives Setna's God. "My father was an alcoholic," Gary tells Angela as he tries to negotiate some intimacy. "Everyone's father was an alcoholic," she retorts.

The piece, at least superfi-

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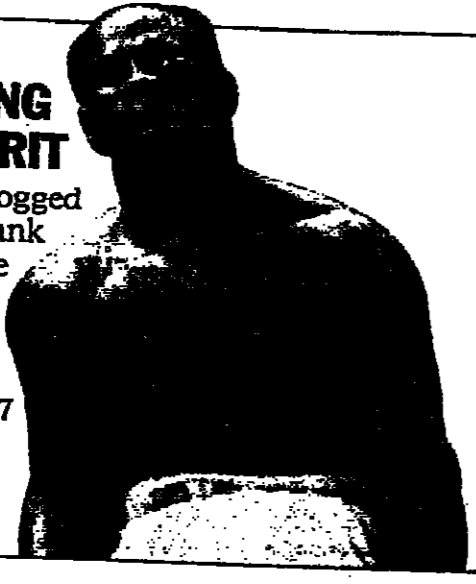
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MONDAY APRIL 20 1998

UNITED'S BATTLE FATIGUE GIVES CAUSE FOR CONCERN



Phil Neville's involvement in England's match against Portugal on Wednesday is in doubt after he sustained an ankle injury against Newcastle



Scholes was the shining star of Le Tournoi last year but is in danger of burning out



Cole was prolific earlier this season but has scored only twice in the past two months

England must heed red alert



Sheringham appears jaded lately while Pallister has been plagued by back problems



Butt's youthful exuberance may wane before World Cup



Gary Neville and David Beckham have not had a proper rest from playing football for almost two years

THE gloating has begun. Now that Manchester United appear to be surrendering the championship in the way that Newcastle United ceded it to them two years ago, half of England seems to mock them. Such fickle behaviour, arrogant though some at Old Trafford may be, the young players there are the nucleus on which Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, hoped to build. If they are wearied by their club, how can they be fresh for their country? Kenny Dalglish, the Newcastle manager, observed, after the 1-1 draw at Old Trafford on Saturday, that the positive thing to come out of this season has been Arsenal rising to standards set by United. But he added: "People forget the majority of Manchester United players went to the Tournoi and have had no rest for two years." Like a doctor putting his finger on a fading pulse, Dalglish identified the ailment that could be sick news for England as well as United.



Neither Holland nor Germany accepted invitations to Le Tournoi and were on the beaches while England toiled. The fraught match at Old Trafford on Saturday included seven United players, and four from Newcastle, who were part of England's World Cup rehearsal ten months ago. All are in the extended squad for the international against Portugal at Wembley on Wednesday, most have suffered physical or emotional strain that is surely a consequence of the physical British style, without the respite of a proper holiday. Those United players summoned to train at Bisham Abbey for the Portugal match are pale shadows of the Reds of a summer ago. Paul Scholes, for instance, was the bright young thing of Nantes last year; now there is no time to rest his sore knee, nor for surgery between club and country commitments. On Saturday Scholes managed half a game, displayed some of his fine quality and ended dispirited. He joined England's training session yesterday because those who did not had been warned that they might as well book a holiday rather than expect to play in the World Cup. Nicky Butt travelled with him, although it may not have been wise to ask him to navigate since he suffered double vision on Saturday. The Neville brothers, too, answered the call, though Gary began the match against

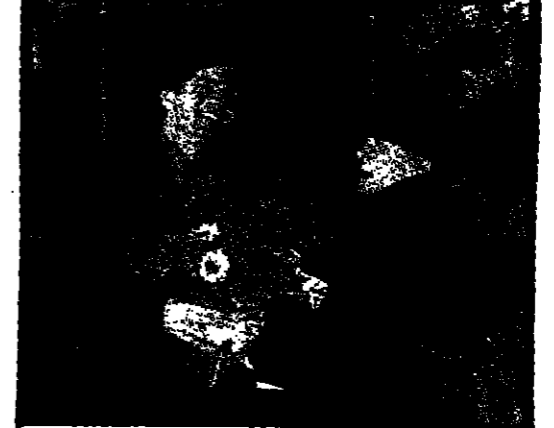
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Newcastle with a temperature and suffering diarrhoea. Phil has a swollen ankle courtesy of a mistimed tackle by Alan Shearer. The England captain was hyperactive in Newcastle's home win over Barnsley last Monday; against United he ran less, possibly the effects of attempting three games in eight days, perhaps saving a bit for England. The comeback after his serious injury cannot be rushed and it spoke volumes that Robert Lee was in far better fettle after missing games because of a hamstring injury, and David Batty was as energetic as he is combative. Batty, sent off twice and booked ten times this season, has had enforced rest between playing 42 times for Newcastle as well as internationals. Time, alas, has run out for Gary Pallister, whose constant back pains preclude him from England selection, while Stuart Pearce is beginning to look his age. So too, perhaps, is Teddy Sheringham. Recalled after being dropped by United for a month, Sheringham still lacked the sparkle to provide opportunities for Andy Cole who, though sharp, has scored just twice in four months. Hoddle has said that he trusts Sheringham and Shearer as his senior attacking pair, but one appears mentally fatigued, while the other is progressing gradually. England, meanwhile, have 50 days to restore tired athletes before the World Cup finals. Hoddle speaks of his admiration for the holistic regimen of Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal coach. The problem is that there are two ingredients that Hoddle cannot lay hands on. Eight of the nine players Wenger recruited for Arsenal are foreign and the Englishman he revived, Tony Adams, was granted time to recuperate from wear and tear. We must hope that Le Tournoi was no pyrrhic victory and that success was no illusion.

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Rangers defeat leaves the league in Celtic's hands

Rangers were plundered at Pittodrie yesterday. They lost the match, because of Stephen Glass's goal for Aberdeen: they lost Lorenzo Amoroso, their centre half, who was sent off in the 59th minute; and, in all probability, they lost the Bell's Scottish League premier division title. Celtic, thanks to a 4-1 win over Motherwell on Saturday, are now three points clear of the throx club at the top of the table.

Only three fixtures remain and Rangers' hopes, too, have almost run out. The side had engineered a revival of form in recent weeks, but not even the broadest of suburban streaks can be relied upon to cover intrinsic weaknesses. Aberdeen needed this result to diminish the fear of relegation, yet, despite that lowly status, they were by far the more coherent side.

Rangers possess players, such as Thern and Albertz, who have supplied bludgeoning moments that have crushed adversaries, but they have been prone to meandering spells and careless moments. After so long a period of domination, they may, too, be suffering from fatigue. Their performance at Pittodrie

was jaded and Jim Leighton, the goalkeeper, kept a clean sheet without the need of a single memorable save.

"This does not help our cause," Walter Smith, the Rangers manager, said. "In previous seasons, when we have been out in front, other teams have said that they would work hard to keep the pressure on us. Now we will be working hard to keep the pressure on Celtic." For the moment, there is stoicism rather than optimism for his side.

Aberdeen had not won a league game against Rangers since February, 1995, and there were no signs that they were about to buck the trend, since they had not won any of their previous seven matches. Nonetheless, their teamwork and effort subdued Rangers. The goal arrived in the 28th minute, when Glass dodged McCall, his marker, to glance a cross from Gillies into the top corner of the net.

The margin of victory could have been greater had not

KEVIN McCARRA



Scottish commentary

Newell, after 71 minutes, contrived to crash a header straight at Goram from close range. After the departure of Amoroso, only Aberdeen threatened.

The Italian, in his third appearance for the club, was shown the red card for raising his hands in an altercation that followed the award of a free kick to Rangers.

In the same incident, McCall, who had been substituted, encroached on the pitch. Since he had already been booked, that offence may bring severe punishment if it features in the referee's report.

It might have been expected that Celtic Park would seethe with passion. Soon after Saturday's match with Motherwell had started, however, the crowd was as quiet as the audience for a string quartet. Trepidation does tend to be accompanied by silence.

Stephen McMillan's goal for the visitors, in the twelfth minute, had subdued those supporters, but so too did the

doubts that linger in their minds over the ability of their side, to cope with adversity. Successive defeats by Rangers, in the league and Tennents Scottish Cup, had eroded confidence.

The significance of strategy seems to wither in the testing, final days of a season and it is the character of individuals that sways results. Craig Burley is apparently the sort of footballer who is stirred by stark circumstances. The deficit inspired a resurgence in him and, with vigorous finishing, Burley scored twice to ensure that Celtic held the lead before the interval.

Having illustrated the force of his shooting, Burley, in the interests of diversity, then employed finesse, creating the opportunities for both of Donnelly's goals. The crowd had been nursed into a contented condition. Euphoria, however, can only really have entered their souls when news came through of yesterday's result at Pittodrie.

ABERDEEN (4-3-1-2) J Leighton - D Rowson, J Ingle, D Whyte, G Smith - R Glass, J Buchanan, S Glass, E Jones (sub R Anderson, 78min) - M Newell (sub B O'Neill, 86), W Dodds
RANGERS (4-3-1-2) A Goram - J Shearer, L Amoroso, R Gough, A Coland (sub C Moore, 78) - J Thorn, S McCall (sub R Gallardo, 58), J Albertz - B Laudrup - G Davis, A McColl (sub M Hegri, 75).
Referee: W Young



Thern, left, struggles to dispossess Newell, of Aberdeen, at Pittodrie yesterday

Inter set up title decider

INTERNAZIONALE kept up the pressure on Juventus at the head of Serie A in Italy yesterday with a dramatic defeat of Udinese at the San Siro stadium. Youri Djorkaeff, of France, and Ronaldo, of Brazil, struck in the last ten minutes as Inter won 2-0 to keep alive their hopes of catching Juventus, who won 1-0 at Empoli.

Inter, a point adrift of Juventus at the start of the day, looked destined to fall further behind until Djorkaeff broke the deadlock in the eightieth minute. Ronaldo added a second six minutes later, after Luigi Turci, the Udinese goalkeeper, had been sent off for handling outside his area. It was Inter's sixth successive league victory.

Juventus survived a tense finale at Empoli after Alessio Tacchinardi, their defender, was sent off, but a goal after 69 minutes by Fabio Pecchia was enough to give them the points. They meet Inter in what will be undoubtedly be the most important game of the season at their Stadio delle Alpi, Turin, next weekend.

Halifax in debt to modest Mulhall

Walter Gammie sees a 2-0 victory confirm Conference championship

GEORGE MULHALL waved aside the plaudits offered for his role in restoring Halifax Town to the Football League when he finally found a quiet corner away from flying champagne corks and emotional back-slappers at Aggborough on Saturday.

Modesty and a deep sense of caution born of 45 years' involvement with the game forbade the Scot from acknowledging fully his role in one of the outstanding managerial success stories of recent times.

In charge at The Shay from 1972 to 1974, subsequently caretaker, Mulhall's third coming at Halifax first saw him preserve the club's Vauxhall Conference status with a heart-stopping victory on the final day of last season and, in a year, transform 66-1 outsiders into runaway champions. It is a magnificent achievement.

Kieran O'Regan, a rock as a player during a turbulent three years, at intervals caretaker-manager and now player-coach, had no such inhibitions. "I've been learning from him all the time," he said. "George has been great. He deserves it. Nearly 62 years old, he's like a two-year-old." In a nutshell, O'Regan had captured his manager's essence. Vast experience is delivered fresh. It is a combination that is irresistible.

"Our problems were easy to see," Mulhall said. "We gave away too many goals." Apart

from Paul Stoneman, the defence was rebuilt from scratch. Geoff Horsfield turned from man on the fringes to leading Conference goalscorer and Jamie Paterson, a tiny, instinctive mid-field player, who had wept bitterly when Halifax were relegated in 1993, was brought back to supply flair and a distinctive, mostly left-footed, touch.

Just how efficient the team moulded by Mulhall has become was abundantly clear on Saturday as they gained a first win at Kidderminster Harriers after four defeats with 14 goals conceded.

The defence kept its fifth consecutive clean-sheet away from home with considerable help from a flawless performance by Rhodes, the goalkeeper, who saved a penalty by Arnold after Kilcline had hauled down Bignall. Horsfield, given a chance by a poor clearance by Steadman, crashed in his 28th league goal just before half-time.

Ten minutes from the finish, Paterson scurried clear and planted a 20-yard shot, with his right foot, into the corner of Steadman's net. Before reaching the halfway line, he stopped, sleeves to eyes, to wipe away rather different tears.

KIDDERMINSTER HARRIERS (4-3-3): D Steadman - K Whittle, S Pope, M West, S Providence - P Wizzo, M Tans, J Deakin - P Davies, M Bignall, I Arnold
HALIFAX TOWN (4-4-2): A Rhodes - P Stoneman, J Murray, B Kilcline, M Bradshaw - A Theobald, J Brown, K O'Regan, J Paterson - G Horsfield, K Hulme
Referee: P Walker



Mulhall counts down the minutes to promotion

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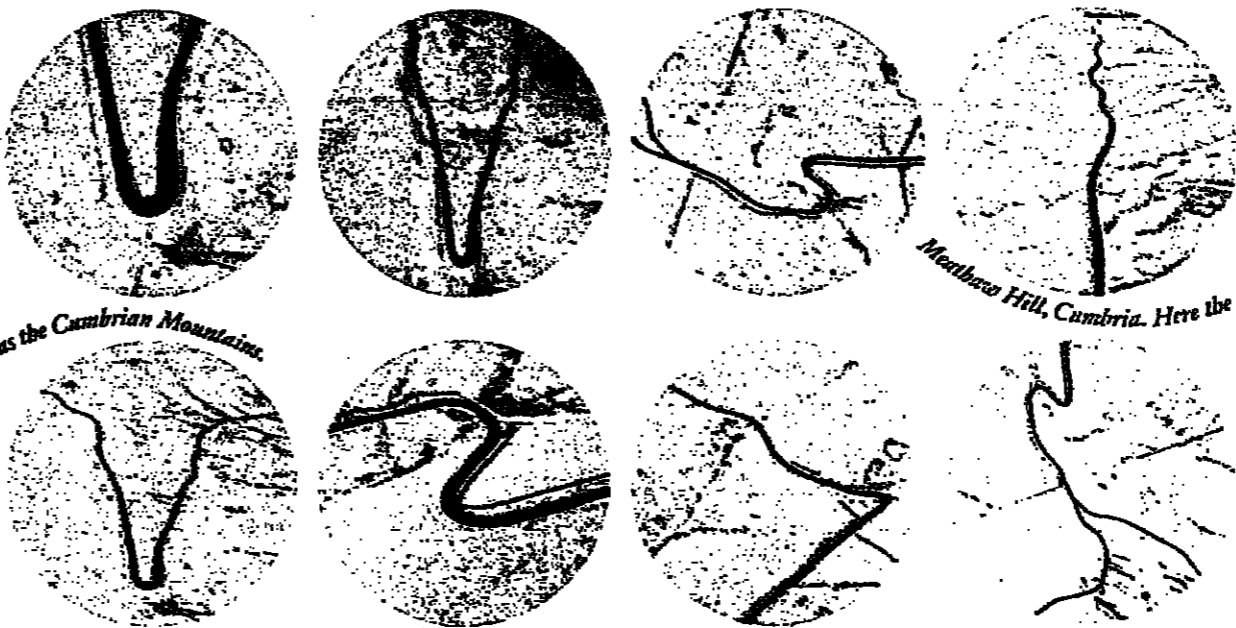
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Table with 3 columns: Match, Home Team, Away Team, Score. Includes Arsenal vs Wimbledon, Tottenham vs Barnsley, Leeds vs Bolton.

Table with 3 columns: Match, Home Team, Away Team, Score. Includes Crystal Palace vs Derby, Manchester United vs Newcastle, Liverpool vs Coventry.

Table with 3 columns: Match, Home Team, Away Team, Score. Includes West Ham vs Blackburn, Chelsea vs Sheffield Wednesday, Everton vs Leicester.

OVERSEAS

Table with 3 columns: League, Home Team, Away Team, Score. Includes Italian League, Spanish League, French League.

NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Table with 3 columns: Division, Home Team, Away Team, Score. Includes First Division, Second Division, Third Division.

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NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

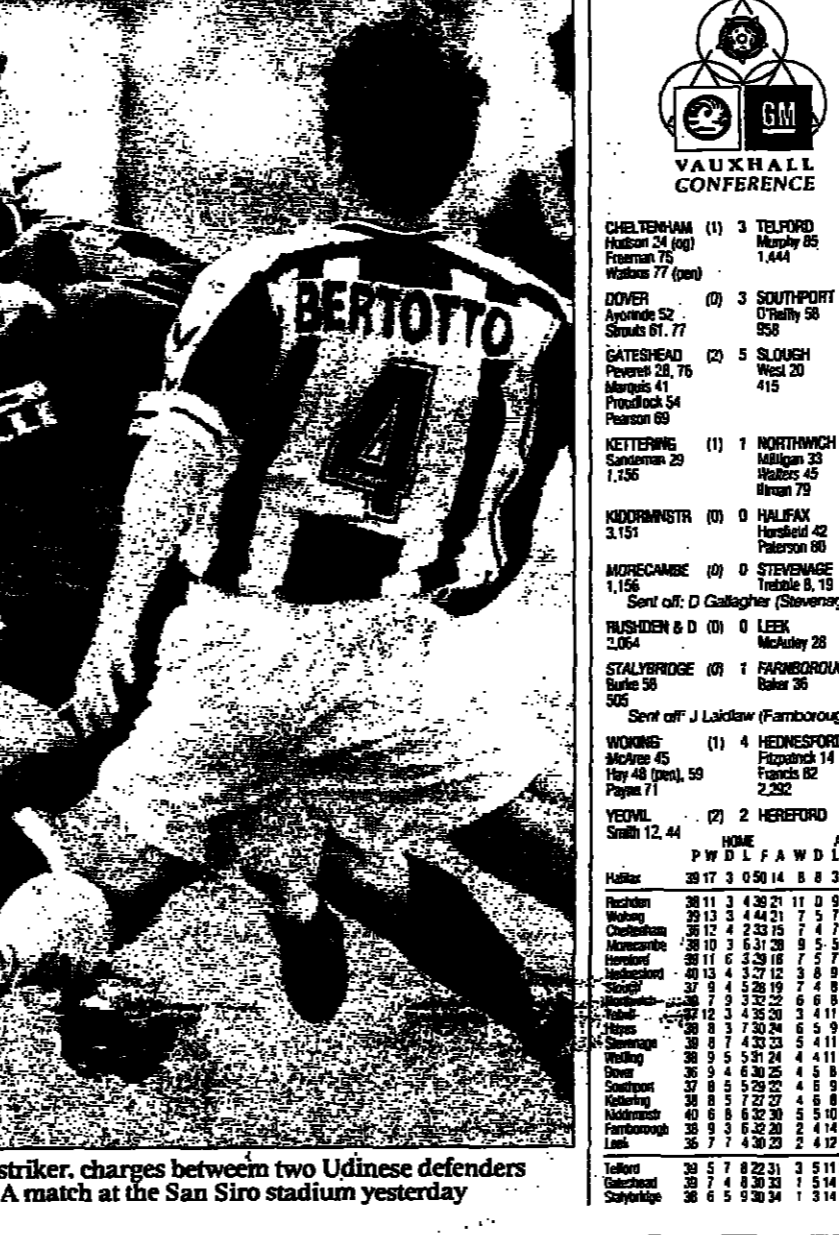
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Ronaldo, the Internazionale striker, charges between two Udinese defenders during his team's Serie A match at the San Siro stadium yesterday.

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NON-LEAGUE AND NATIONAL LEAGUES

Table with 3 columns: League, Home Team, Away Team, Score. Includes Unbond, Ryman, National.

NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

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GOALS CORNERS

Table with 3 columns: Match, Player, Team, Minute.

NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Table with 3 columns: Division, Home Team, Away Team, Score. Includes First Division, Second Division, Third Division.

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GOALS CORNERS

Table with 3 columns: Match, Player, Team, Minute.

GOALS CORNERS

Table with 3 columns: Match, Player, Team, Minute.

POOLS CHECK

Table with 3 columns: Pool, Home Team, Away Team, Score.

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NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

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Large vertical advertisement for 'Hypnotise' featuring a woman's face and text.

Hypnotised for 17 days in Vine's twilight world

I was as well for David Vine that he looked bronzed and rested for the first of the BBC's many instalments of the Embassy world snooker championship. Like a primed thoroughbred, our host was nicely on his toes on Saturday for the start of the sport's longest televised marathon. Quite what he will resemble when he emerges from 17 subterranean days is as grossing a prospect as the identity of the tournament winner.

Which spawns an idea in itself. Snooker and betting are closely aligned — a little too snugly, if recent headlines alleging fixed matches are to be believed. Whatever, while diehards assess the odds about Ronnie O'Sullivan and Ste-

phen Hendry, MBE, my book solely concerns Vine and his daily state. I offer 5-4 on Vine completing the course, 6-4 against him going colour-blind, 7-2 against him having an extra six wrinkles around his eyes and 25-1 — and please accept this in the spirit it is intended — against him succumbing to old age. In the vernacular of the committed punter, stranger things have happened.

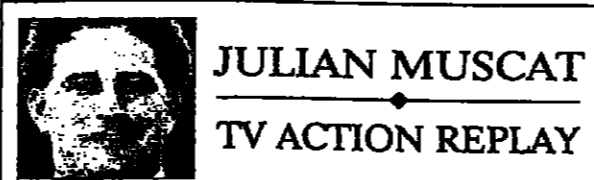
These are peculiar thoughts to entertain as you gaze across the baize. Yet they are irresistible. Snooker's format, initially compelling, leaves nothing to the imagination. When Hendry opens up, he will pot reds and blacks alternately before systematically sinking the colours. You want

him to miss. When O'Sullivan opens up, he will pot many reds and blacks, but he will probably miss at some stage. You want him to pot the lot. What you want, in fact, is a hard slap of the unexpected to jolt you to your senses. As Messrs Hendry and O'Sullivan go about their business, I'd like to bet on the number of pots before the referee is asked to clean the cue-ball. I'd bet on the number of times a player chalks his cue over a session. Or the length of time before the green is potted. Anything other than the outcome of the match itself.

Watching snooker, turns everything about face. It puts you to sleep in the afternoons; keeps you awake at nights. You want to be gripped by it, shopping? Will I miss anything? Will Hendry smile? Will O'Sullivan blow a fuse? You just can't take the chance. After all, you've already watched for hour upon hour waiting for something to happen.

Vine knows this. He knows that something will happen; it always does, and he revels in the moment. He smiles from the corner of his mouth, as if knowing that you've missed it, teasing you, berating you, inferring: "You ought to know better than to go to the loo when O'Sullivan's at the table."

Why do we do it? Why do we go through it, year after year? Because snooker, at its best, is utterly compelling drama. Witness the stirring encounter in the 1985 final, when Dennis Taylor and Steve Davis contested that last black for the world championship, when an astonishing 18.5 million viewers watched Davis fluff a "gimme" by his standards. It represented the ultimate emotion: sheer disbelief at what you have just seen.



JULIAN MUSCAT
TV ACTION REPLAY

That sort of audience is a freak: a one-off, and snooker has almost certainly suffered for it. Subsequent audiences

have never come close, although I'd bet that a Davis-O'Sullivan final, down to the wire, would make many millions late for work on the morning of May 5. Such a payoff is heightened for those who waded through the early rounds, pondering Vine's stamina and all those other distractions.

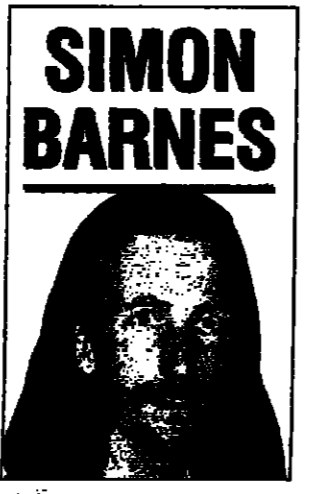
For the BBC, of course, this world championship is a boon to the budget. It is low-cost entertainment guaranteeing sizeable audiences, with the promise of a jackpot at the end. Only in February, the final of the Benson and Hedges Masters drew a peak audience of eight million on BBC2 — and that with the television premier of Jurassic Park on BBC1.

And then, almost before we know it, we are gripped by a nerve-jangling contest. The steely façades of Davis and Hendry dissolve before us as pots go astray. Vine's condition no longer preoccupies us, and we have long since lost count of the cleaning of cue balls and the chalking of cues.

'We had all the gimmicks associated with razzmatazz... where were my earplugs when I needed them?'

Boom time rears its ugly head again

This was the best game of rugby in the United Kingdom ever outside Twickenham. So I was informed by a young fellow who seemed poor chap, to be partially sighted. At any rate, he was wearing the darkest possible sunglasses on a very dark and cloudy day.



SIMON BARNES

The best game ever in the UK? Beating anything at, say, Murrayfield or Cardiff Arms Park? This is exactly what the brave new world of rugby union really needs: a hysterical lout yelling ridiculous lies into a microphone through a public address system turned up well beyond the threshold of pain.

When I hear the word razzmatazz I reach for my revolver. But all the same, there really were 19,764 people at Vicarage Road yesterday watching club rugby. They watched Saracens against Newcastle, or Newcastle Falcons as we must call them. It was a mostly dire match with a magnificent last ten minutes and Saracens won 12-10.



Saracens supporters, sporting their distinctive headgear, contribute to the big-match atmosphere at Vicarage Road yesterday. Photograph: Marc Aspland

And it really was a sell-out, and it really was the biggest crowd for a club match in England outside of Twickenham. It was played between two of the sport's *nouveaux riches* and the riches mean that this was a top-of-the-table clash. In rugby union, you really can buy happiness, though not cheaply.

So we had all the tawdry gimmicks associated with the "R-word". Cheerleaders. Chaps throwing things into the crowd. Unbearably loud music. Where were my Formula One earplugs when I needed them?

Let me not be too carping. It is an achievement all right, this record crowd. It comes from something called the Cashback Scheme, which means that many of the faces in the crowd do not actually represent a full-price ticket for Saracens.

Success also comes from success. Shrewd organising, shrewd buying of players. All it took was the two-million quid, contribution of Nigel Wray. The club, shifting twice, in successive seasons, has created a good deal of local following now that it is based at the home of Watford Football Club.

It has done this by "going into the community", something that always sounds frightfully virtuous, though all it really means is sell hard and sell local.

So this is boom time. So far, so good. Flashback time: a decade and a half back, a few miles south of Watford Junction railway station stands a certain stadium with twin towers. And there was me, reporting on a boom time in a boom sport.

Wembley was filled, packed out with joyous pilgrims. Was there no height that American football could not reach? Jim MacMahon came, Dan Marino came, even The Fridge came. We couldn't get enough of it. Everything to do with American football was touched by glamour, touched by magic.

The only question worth asking was: what next? And what came next was the World League of American Football (WLAF), and our very own London Monarchs, playing at our very own Wembley Stadium.

And don't laugh. Memories in sport are short. In June 1991, 61,108 people went to Wembley to watch Our Boys win the World Bowl. Boom time.

Boom time, bust time. The WLAF has become America's sporting equivalent of Vietnam. The only thing that stops them pulling out now is a kind of megalomaniacal embarrassment.

Offside and video replays

From Mr Terry Wall
Sir, It is an excellent idea from Tony Whelpton (April 14) to exercise the offside rule (and consult a video replay) only after a goal. One wide-angle TV linked to a personal computer would be all that is needed — the computer program could calculate, and show, lines across the pitch corrected for parallax and leave no margin for doubt — without requiring a battery of cameras up and down the touchline.

decided after a goal using the TV/PC evidence — which could be broadcast to the crowd prior to the re-start.
Yours sincerely,
TERRY F. WALL,
4 Westminster Gate,
Winchester SO22 4LN.
tony.whelpton@virgin.net

Need for a national trail system for runners

From Mr Brian Kolbe
Sir, John Bryant (Bryant's Eye, April 16) is quite correct — there is considerable enjoyment from running the trails parks. However, he fails to make maybe the most significant point.
As a runner of some 40 years, sent to retire prematurely with osteoarthritis in both knees and also as a part owner of one of the early sports medicine clinics founded in this country, I can speak with some experience when I say that "tarmac running" is doubtless to blame for countless pressure on the muscular-skeletal system, thence causing soft tissue injuries.

back into the development of a national "off-road" system. If the net result was that more runners could stay active for longer, then they would continue to purchase the shoes.
Perhaps some of the Lottery profits could also go to this worthy cause. After all, we are all told to try to keep fit to improve our cardiovascular system. Running is a very simple sport to take part in and to be enjoyed at all levels.
Eventually perhaps a "trail system" could even enable us to become far less dependent on the four-wheel method of transport.
Yours faithfully,
BRIAN KOLBE,
Glenshek, The Drive, Belmont, Surrey SM2 7DP.

French talent in England

From Mr John Blance
Sir, In recent discussion on Match of the Day of Arsenal's French players, there was surprise that Emmanuel Petit and Patrick Viera had not been chosen for their national team (since then, in fact, Viera has been).
We had the same parochial attitude over Eric Cantona a few years ago. Yet the reason for omitting him from Euro 96 may have been because both Youri Djorkaeff and Christophe Dugarry were better players. In Viera's and Petit's positions France also have Didier Deschamps and Zinedine Zidane of Juventus and Marcel Desailly of AC Milan at their disposal.
What I take issue with is the blind assumption that just because a certain player plays well for a team in England then he should be picked for his national side. Footballers of international quality are not commodities confined to the FA Carling Premiership.
Yours sincerely,
JOHN BLANCE,
3 Shaftoe Leazes, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3DF.

Waning Warne

From Mr Stan Johnson
Sir, While many pundits were surprised to see Shane Warne upstaged by Anil Kumble during Australia's somewhat disastrous tour of India, it is astonishing to discover that since the inclusion of a second spinner against South Africa in the Third Test at Adelaide — a policy continued during the three Tests in India —

Shane Warne has been playing second fiddle to his fellow-spinner (see table below).
Does this mean that Warne is losing his fire-power, perhaps because of his shoulder injury, or (or) is he being used as a specialist against England's tour next winter) are they simply recharging their arsenal of spinners?
Yours sincerely,
STAN JOHNSON,
10 Russell Road,
Palmer's Green, London N13.

Ripping idea

From Mr Tony Blades
Sir, Will somebody please invent soccer shirts made of cloth sections attached by velcro, so that the shirt-puller would get just a handful of cloth? This would a) give clear evidence that a foul had occurred, and b) enable the player with the ball to continue his move. Or will someone explain why it can't be done?
Yours sincerely,
TONY BLADES,
106 Paterson St,
Birkenhead,
Wirral L41 4BJ.
tonymj@aol.com

SPORT IN THE TIMES THIS WEEK



Tomorrow: Glen Hoddle outlines his plans ahead of Wednesday's match against Portugal
Tuesday: Surface tension: will Greg Rusedski and Tim Henman be able to cope with the clay courts at the Monte Carlo open?
Thursday: Full report and comment on England's Wembley match in preparation for the World Cup
Friday: As the first week of the World Snooker Championship draws to a close, who is still in the frame?
Football Saturday: Premiership match-by-match reports, all the promotion and relegation news, plus Danny Baker and Frank Leboeuf

Sports letters may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5211. They should include a daytime telephone number, e-mail, which should include address and telephone number, may be sent to: sport.letters@the-times.co.uk

3rd Test (Adelaide)	Warne 3-146	McGill 5-134
1st Test (Chennai)	Warne 5-207	Robertson 5-164
2nd Test (Calcutta)	Warne 0-147	Robertson 2-183
3rd Test (Bangalore)	Warne 5-186	Robertson 5-80

RUGBY UNION

Saint-Andre adds French polish to Gloucester's verve

Gloucester 27
Bath 17

By MARK SOUSTER

IT IS a galling thought for Richard Hill and one that has caused him considerable angst. How is it that Gloucester can carry all before them at Kingsholm yet play so poorly on their travels? This vigorous, merited victory over Bath was their eighth in ten starts at home, yet they have picked up only three points away.

away from home. Instead of concentrating on what we do well at home, we try too much," he said. That Gloucester have made such strides this season, however, is due in no small measure to the former France captain. Injuries may have reduced his effectiveness on the field, yet his limited input was again vital. His first real contribution came when he chased back to deny Jean Evans a try, and his last earned the penalty that Mark Mapletoft kicked to seal victory.

Catherine wheel of players exploding in all directions. Saint-Andre took the ball from Tombs on the burst and brushed aside Guscott's attempted tackle. Saint-Andre, however, absolved the England centre from blame, "I have played in the centre before and, when the defence is drifting and someone cuts the line like I did, it is virtually impossible to stop."

Cornish cup dreams go west



Blood bursts through the Cornwall defence to score Cheshire's second try. Photograph: Andrew Parsons

David Hands sees Cheshire spoil the Twickenham county championship party

rugby, try Cornwall: there is tradition, geographical identity, social expression. Would 35,000 follow an amorphous Wessex Warriors? This year, though, belonged to Cheshire, who were in danger of being ignored even while they received the trophy from the Duke of Edinburgh, patron of the Cornish Rugby Union. They won because they placed greater control on the game and played with the confidence of those used to winning, as they have done so frequently this season for Manchester, New Brighton and Widnes, the clubs from which all but four of their squad were drawn.

forwards drove from a line-out, recycled ball in a manner fit to please the most demanding coach, and Briers completed the try with a deft dart. Cornwall gathered in a huddle as the conversion was taken, only to find themselves turned over when the game restarted. Briers launched the powerful Hoskin down the left wing and the two exchanged passes over 60 metres before the ball ripped to the right, where Blood destroyed the tattered remains of the Cornish defence.

Twickenham county championship party. Cornwall roofing contractor who captains Cornwall, said. If only other counties could emulate the passion of Ship-ton and his colleagues: if only a stray millionaire would decide that Cornish rugby was a worthy investment — but then, perhaps, it would not be what it is.

Stransky applies finishing touch

LEICESTER moved to within a point of Bath in the race for third place in the Allied Dunbar Premiership first division by beating Harlequins 23-14 at the Stoop Memorial Ground on Saturday. The Leicester fly half, Joel Stransky, contributed 18 points, including an interception try, and made Leon Lloyd's try in injury time, which finally put the game beyond Harlequins' reach, although, on the balance of play, Leicester's victory was well deserved.

Chapman, a strong claimant for a place in the England party to tour the southern hemisphere this summer, crossed twice for Richmond. In the Super 12 competition, Otago Highlanders kept their unbeaten home record intact with a 29-8 win over Wellington Hurricanes in Dunedin and moved up to third in the table. But they are still five points behind Auckland Blues, who beat the Northern Bulls 34-24, the last of their four tries coming from Jonah Lomu.

REALITY has to be suspended when the Cornish come to town. Instead, emotion takes over. We all remember the day-trip we made to Land's End, we genuinely want Cornwall to win, and a 10-year-old competition comes alive once more. Only the fanatical Cornish can do this for the Tety's Bitter county championship, and even Cheshire were grateful. "Cornwall made the final for us and we have to say thank you to their supporters, they were brilliant," Kevin Brookman said, having captained Cheshire, the party-poopers, to a 21-14 victory in the final at Twickenham on Saturday. Not one of his squad would have begrudged the losers their lap of honour at the end, pride in the yellow-and-black shirt oozing from them as they applauded their 35,000 supporters.

THE sentiment of the occasion should not conceal what the championship is — an uneven competition that means much to its participants but little to the game's followers at large. Yet, if you want to talk about regional

Mitchell extends National Cup run

Saracens 5
Wasps 0

By DAVID HANDS

WHERE the men of Saracens will hope to go at Twickenham on May 9, the club's women went at the Stoop Memorial Ground on Saturday. The prime difference is that this was the third successive year, and the fifth occasion in the competition's 12-year history, that Saracens have won what is now the Bread for Life National Cup.

It was not, to be fair, their most commanding performance but it sets them as a club apart in the women's game. They have won the league, their second team leads in the third division and, in Emma Mitchell, they possess a player who not only presses the game in the way that Karen Almond, as Wasps fly half, did ten years ago. Appropriately, it was Mitchell who scored the game's try in the fifth minute, well before the cold wind and heavy rain served to numb fingers. The scrum half was a pace ahead of most of her colleagues in thought and deed, her decision-making not matched by the execution of others.

The starting line-ups featured 17 of the squad that will help England in the defence of their World Cup in Holland next month. Indeed, every Saracens player has been capped at senior level. Saracens knew that Wasps would prove difficult opponents, having won the league meeting last month only 10-7. They dominated the first half but the balance of possession in the second went to Wasps, via their lineout, where Linda Utley was so effective. Had they been able to capitalise on their supremacy in the third quarter, they might have snatched the cup but Saracens' defence, exemplified by Trudi Collins in the centre, never faltered.

Advertisement for 'Golf in the Algarve' featuring a large image of a golfer on a green. Text includes 'THREE NIGHTS FROM £299' and 'Today The Times offers readers the opportunity to enjoy a short golf break to Portugal's beautiful Algarve. Located on the Quinta do Lago estate, just 20 minutes from Faro airport, Vilas do Golf Resort Club overlooks hundreds of acres of lush woodlands and dazzling lagoons. You will play at Quinta do Lago and Vilamoura championship golf courses. Vilas do Golf has two restaurants, two swimming pools, three floodlit tennis courts, saunas, gym and squash court. Your accommodation will be a one-bedroom apartment with bathroom, living room, cable television, fully equipped kitchen (including dishwasher) and a terrace or balcony.' Includes a coupon for more details and a list of prices per person.

GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD. A detailed sports calendar listing events for today, tomorrow, and the weekend across various sports including football, snooker, bowls, and rugby. It includes league names, match times, and locations.

Advertisement for 'THE STAR STUDDED WORLD XV' rugby match. Text includes 'for the third year THE STAR STUDDED WORLD XV V 1998 ENGLISH CLUB CHAMPIONS AT TWICKENHAM Saturday 23 May 1998'. It features an image of a rugby player and lists ticket prices and contact information.

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, partially obscured and difficult to read. It appears to be for a business or service, with some text like 'Lynagh's' and 'atkins in despair' visible.

Saracens overcome leaders at the last to keep Allied Dunbar Premiership title race alive

Lynagh gets the drop on Newcastle

Saracens 12 Newcastle 10

By DAVID HANDS RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

WHEN nails were bitten to the quick at Vicarage Road yesterday...

The Australian fly half has been involved in so many critical moments throughout a 12-year international career...

TABLE with columns P, W, D, L, F, A, Pts for various teams.

five matches remaining, the first of them against Wasps on Wednesday...



Lynagh launches the last-minute kick that gave Saracens a dramatic triumph over Newcastle at Vicarage Road yesterday. Photograph: Marc Aspland

only ten minutes remaining, had decided the outcome. Significantly, the character came from some of the unsung heroes...

element of a match that opened with such speed and enterprise was to see Lynagh, who kicked six penalties...

he clung on to a pass from Tait. As it was, Newcastle had to be content with Andrew's equalising penalty...

drifting offside and Lynagh chipping over the goal. By then, Newcastle had introduced Walton to their back row...

only a wall of defenders; there remained enough space for Lynagh to line up the posts and let fly with a kick...

Australian delighted to settle an old score

By DAVID HANDS

"HE owed me that one, I suppose." Rob Andrew said...

At Vicarage Road yesterday, Lynagh returned the compliment with the goal that beat Newcastle...

Simon Barnes 33

rugby, the conditions weren't great but the defences were. I was a bit out of sorts with my kicking early on...

Newcastle's remaining five fixtures include home games with Bath and Leicester...

Watkins in despair at sad decline

Newport 10 Ebbw Vale 18

By MICHAEL AYLWIN

NEWPORT were more or less resigned to relegation well before this Gwent derby...

Saturday's league programme in Wales, however, was played only after the clubs had threatened to boycott it...

The threat of strike action had not really been planned properly, but, hopefully, someone in the WRU will take a lead...

With Cecil Duckworth's money behind them, it will be fascinating to see how ambitious Worcester fare in the higher league...

Beaten Bristol await arrival of the cavalry

Bristol 5 London Irish 17

By PETER BILLS



Jones: costly mistakes

PERHAPS this result means that Bristol are relegated from the Allied Dunbar Premiership...

the mud, rain and cold of the Memorial Ground yesterday resembled, to paraphrase Wilde, the indistinguishable in fear of the unmentionable...

move that symbolised Bristol's chief flaw: they attempted passes that were totally unsuitable for a day when standing close and running straight was the only practical tactic...

continued to frustrate everyone until, at last, Bristol scored, appropriately from an Irish mistake...

Worcester win jackpot in promotion lottery

Worcester 25 Leeds 20

By NICOLAS ANDREWS

WILL it be four or will it be two teams promoted from the Jenson National League? One week to go in a league programme...

he supplements his assortment of former Gloucester and Moseley players, he could be right. Worcester have beaten Bristol, Neath and Cardiff...

Bedford in market for top fly half

Paul Turner 39

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

PAUL TURNER, 39, Bedford's director of coaching, who announced his retirement as a player after the 16-3 victory over Exeter on Saturday...

Whistling referee out of tune with players

Sale 28 Wasps 28

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

IN A perfect world, referees would be heard and not seen. The obligatory yellow shirt for officials in the Allied Dunbar Premiership was not the only thing conspicuous about Chris Rees...

pressure at the moment and their response is to be pretty negative. We're training under one set of rules and you don't know what's going to happen when you turn out on the pitch...

Wappett's reign ends in style

England Schools 26 Ireland Schools 22

By ALAN PEAREY

SO YET another England triple crown. Geoff Wappett bowed out as England Schools (B8-group) coach with a dramatic win over Ireland at Stourbridge...

His winning send-off on Saturday was achieved despite a high penalty count, regular turnovers and poor throwing-in at the line-out...

The game ended as it began, with an offside decision, and Howarth potting his seventh penalty goal for Sale...

The threat of strike action had not really been planned properly, but, hopefully, someone in the WRU will take a lead...

Advertisement for a service with phone number 0181 831 665.

CRICKET

Redevelopments could lead to new Test venues

SIMON WILDE



Championship Commentary

There are probably a hundred ways to demonstrate how unrevolutionary English cricket has been over the years...

Refreshingly, this situation may soon change, because revolution is underway, albeit slowly...

The idea has captured the imagination of both parties, each of whom has seen better financial and sporting days...

This season seating on top of the Gillingham stand has shrunk from 400 to 100 at the insistence of the fire officer...



Gough: bold display

SATURDAY'S SCOREBOARDS

Table containing various cricket scoreboards including Britannic Assurance county championship, Gloucestershire v Glamorgan, and Kent v Middlesex.

Sussex start to slide before the drizzle

By SIMON WILDE

HOVE (third day of four): Sussex, with six first-innings wickets in hand, are 191 runs behind Lancashire

IT COULD be said that Lancashire have an embarrassment of leaders. They are led in the Britannic Assurance county championship match at Hove by John Crawley...

When Crawley took over the deputy's job last year, it looked as though the club was clearing a path to the future.



Adams, the Sussex captain, scored 5 in his first championship innings in charge

Crawley compiled a stuporous 49 on the ground on which two years ago he played arguably his finest innings for his county...

Yorkshire profit as Reeve's return cut short

By BARNEY SPENDER

HEADINGLEY (Somerset won toss): Yorkshire beat Somerset by 38 runs under the Duckworth Lewis system

IT WAS a doubly painful return to county cricket for Dermot Reeve, the Somerset coach, yesterday as he limped from the field with a groin injury...

With rain in the air, they went after the bowling to ensure that they were well ahead of Yorkshire at the terv-over stage.

Sidebottom's previous three outings in the Sunday league had produced the unflattering return of one wicket for 103 in 19 overs...

From his fourth ball, Bowler aimed to run the ball through the slips and was well caught by Blakey.

Cork taking most of the tricks

By RICHARD HOBSON

DERBY (third day of four): Nottinghamshire, with six second-innings wickets in hand, need 166 runs to avoid an innings defeat against Derbyshire

A TEN-DAY tour of South Africa ensured that Nottinghamshire enjoyed plenty of outdoor practice before the start of the season. Whether that was appropriate preparation for a championship game at Derby in the April gloom might be questioned in the light of their unhappy experience here so far.

YESTERDAY'S SCOREBOARDS

Table containing various cricket scoreboards including Britannic Assurance county championship, Derbyshire v Nottinghamshire, and Yorkshire v Somerset.

Advertisement for a cricket tournament, including details about South Africa v Sri Lanka and other international matches.

Advertisement for a cricket match between Yorkshire and Somerset, featuring player statistics and match details.

Arabic text at the bottom right of the page, possibly a watermark or a note from the printer.

CRICKET

Kent gain the day in finish of high farce

CANTERBURY (Kent won toss): Kent beat Middlesex by one run

IN A situation that might have baffled Archimedes, Pythagoras, Newton, Einstein and Turing, Kent began their Sunday league season with a one-run victory over Middlesex, after rain stopped play at 6.42pm.

By MICHAEL HENDERSON

intervenes, it seems that anything can happen. Few spectators were aware of the result, and nobody made an effort to inform them until most people had left the ground.

needed and wickets in hand, offered no clue. As a result the batsmen and bowlers were in the dark. Nobody knew how many runs they had to make, or could afford to concede.

Wells effectively won Kent the game when he smacked Bloomfield to the square-leg boundary in the final over, the 26th, and then stole a single. Wells ended up 46 not out, having shared a third-wicket stand of 87 with Hooper, who drove a catch to deep cover in what turned out to be the penultimate over of the innings.

Had Bloomfield managed to hold a catch inside the rope at deep mid-wicket, instead of carrying the ball over, when Wells pulled Johnson towards the famous lime tree, Middlesex would have won. Instead, as the drizzle intensified and the umbrellas went up, it was clear that the game would not run its natural course.

Rain draws veil over Hollioake's blushes

By JOHN STERN

THE OVAL (Surrey won toss): Match abandoned, Surrey 2 pts, Northamptonshire 2

APRIL has, thus far, been a month that Adam Hollioake, the Surrey captain, may prefer to forget. The disappointments of the one-day series in the West Indies have been compounded by the frustrations of the weather and, yesterday, by a spell of bowling reminiscent of his less impressive efforts in the Caribbean.

He bowled three overs for 30 and was severely dealt with by David Sales, who added 71 in 68 balls for the fourth wicket with Mal Loye, who himself top-scored with 19 in Northamptonshire's 162 for five from 34 overs.

Richard Montgomery, made a solid father than spectacular start, kept in check by the 37-year-old Joe Benjamin, who bowled his eight overs for only 17. Montgomery made a scratchy dozen but Loye was in better form.

hitting Ian Salisbury for a straight six and falling a yard short of repeating the feat the following ball. Mark Butcher bowled Loye with his first ball, a delivery of full length that played his off and middle stumps.

At Edgbaston, rain forced Tim Munton, the former England seamer, to delay his comeback for another week as Warwickshire's Axa League match against Durham was washed out. After more than a year out with a back problem, the champions' former captain was due to re-appear in the first game in defence of their title.

India allowed Australia to add 37 runs off the last 22 balls, but the Australians found run-making difficult on a lifeless pitch otherwise. Bevan's 58, the top score of their innings, came entirely from brisk running between the stumps.



Riding a wave: The crew of EF Language, the overall leader, bids farewell to Fort Lauderdale as the seventh leg gets under way yesterday

Collins quickest to make his mark

Edward Gorman, Sailing Correspondent, tests the mood at the start of leg seven of the Whitbread Round the World Race

George Collins and the crew of Chesie Racing, with John Kosteki at the wheel, were quickest out of the starting blocks yesterday as the Whitbread Round the World Race fleet set off on the seventh leg of the race.

Conditions north of the entrance to Port Everglades off Lauderdale were ideal for a spectacular downwind start and the Whitbread 60s powering along on a bumpy sea in close formation under spinnakers at speeds of up to 14kt. The start at 1pm local time was watched by an estimated 400 spectator craft and a cluster of 12 helicopters hovering above.

Collins, whose privately-funded campaign is based in Baltimore, is hoping for a sterling performance on this, the second-shortest leg of the race. At 870 nautical miles, it is expected to take only three or four days. On board Chesie, the performance of which has been hampered by the use of a squad system for crew selection, Collins has two

top international performers in Kosteki and Gavin Brady, of New Zealand, who he hopes will produce a timely win into his home port.

At the first gate three miles down the course, Chesie had a lead of just seven seconds over Great Britain's Lawrie Smith, on Silk Cut, which was being steered by the watch captain, Gordon Maguire. For Smith this leg is another chance to prove that his team is as good as those ahead of him on the leaderboard. Silk Cut is sixth overall and he is aiming for his second leg win in a row.

Third at the mark was Toshiba, skippered and driven by Dennis Conner, who has taken over from Great Britain's Paul Standbridge for this leg. Paul Cayard, on EF Language, the overall race leader,

was in fourth place, 17 seconds astern of Chesie. The back marker at that stage was Grant Dalton's Merit Cup, which reached the gate just over a minute behind the leading boats.

By the second and last mark, where the crews peeled to reaching spinnakers as they headed out towards the Gulf Stream, Chesie had extended her lead over Silk Cut to 42 seconds with Toshiba four seconds further back. Knut Frostad's Innovation Kvaerner had moved to fourth place, just ahead of EF Language.

Before the start, the challenge of Chesapeake Bay, which makes up the last 150 miles of the leg, was still uppermost in skipper's minds. Collins who knows the area as well as anyone, said: "Chesapeake Bay is a tricky water. You can have

wind on one side and no wind on the other, with currents coming into play. There are a lot of shoals and, if the wind is blowing from the north, it could be very, very tricky."

Tricky was also the word used by Cayard. "At the start we have got the Gulf Stream so that is a nice conveyor belt that everyone wants to get into early," he said. "My guess is that it is going to be pretty close and we will be able to see almost everybody almost the whole way. When we get to the Chesapeake, if the wind is light, it is likely it could be quite tricky, especially after the last bridge," Cayard added.

In terms of the overall standings, Gunnar Krantz's Swedish Match is closest to Cayard but the gap is 115 points. Cayard can be expected to keep a close eye on Krantz, while the genial Swede knows nothing less than a win for him will do at this stage in the race. "It is a must-win leg for us and a must-do bad leg for EF Language," he said yesterday.

AN EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION

WIN A FERRARI

Plus Grand Prix trips to Australia and Monaco to be won

The Fantasy Formula One results of the Argentine Grand Prix appear below, with Mika Hakkinen leading the drivers on 479 points and McLaren heading the constructors with 85 points. G. Moschella of Bedford wins a pair of four-day passes to the year's British Grand Prix. His team, GMRH, scored 917 points in Buenos Aires and comprised Fisichella, M. Schumacher, Hakkinen, Wurz, Trulli, Takagi, Ferrari, Benetton, McLaren, Sauber, Stewart and Tyrrell. The winner of our fantasy title will drive away at the end of the season in a Ferrari 328 GTB, valued at over £40,000. Second prize is a trip for two to the 1999 Australian Grand Prix. Third prize is a trip for two to the 1999 Monaco Grand Prix. There is still time to enter a team by phone or post, or to make transfers, to qualify for next Sunday's San Marino Grand Prix - see the entry details below. An updated leaderboard after the Argentine Grand Prix will be published in The Times on Friday.

THE TIMES FANTASY FORMULA ONE

MAKE THREE SELECTIONS FROM EACH OF THE FOUR GROUPS BELOW

The first column of figures after the names below, shows the Fantasy Formula One race scores for the Argentine GP. The second column shows the total points scored in the competition so far.

DRIVERS				CONSTRUCTORS							
GROUP A		GROUP B		GROUP C	GROUP D						
01 D Hill	118 230	07 H-H Frenzen	112 363	12 A Wurz	143 382	18 J Magnussen	7 130	23 Williams	3 49	29 Salazar	12 31
02 M Schumacher	180 317	08 E Irvine	138 374	13 R Schumacher	34 52	19 T Takagi	109 133	24 Ferrari	30 57	30 Arrows	20 70
03 D Coulthard	130 410	09 M Hakkinen	149 478	14 J Trulli	119 169	20 R Rosset	109 169	25 Benetton	23 56	31 Stewart	7 6
04 G Fisichella	125 300	10 J Aloni	135 307	15 J Herbert	91 290	21 S Nakano	116 116	26 McLaren	25 86	32 Tyrrell	15 30
05 J Villeneuve	82 295	11 R Barrichello	119 182	16 M Salo	16 57	22 E Tuero	60 119	27 Jordan	9 3	33 Minardi	4 41
06 O Paris	88 275			17 P Dabz	12 17			28 Prost	6 6		

FANTASY FORMULA ONE 24-HOUR ENTRY LINE: 0891 40 50 01
+44 990 100 311 outside the UK 0891 calls cost 50p per minute (standard tariffs apply to +44 990 calls)

TO ENTER BY PHONE: Readers in the UK and Republic of Ireland must call 0891 40 50 01 (+44 990 100 311 from RoI). Calls last about seven minutes and must be made by Touch-tone telephone. Follow the instructions and tap in your 12 two-digit selections in turn. The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply. Then give your team name (up to 16 characters) and details. You can enter until noon on Thursday, April 23, 1998 to qualify for the San Marino Grand Prix.

TO ENTER BY POST: Complete the form, right, with your 12 two-digit selections. The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply.

TRANSFERS: You can change up to four selections before the San Marino race by calling 0891 555 994 (+44 990 100 394 ex UK) before noon on Thursday April 23 with your 10-digit PIN to hand. Your new team must have three selections from each of groups A, B, C and D.

RESULTS SERVICE: BY PHONE: check the score and position of your team(s) after the Argentine race by calling 0891 284 648 (+44 990 100 348 ex UK) with your 10-digit PIN. BY FAX: have your 10-digit PIN ready, pick up the handset on your fax and dial 0891 111 444. Follow the instructions and press the appropriate buttons when asked. You will receive details of your race score, the points for your drivers and constructors and your position on our leaderboard. If your fax does not have a handset, press the on-hook or telephone button instead. Calls cost £1 per minute and are available in the UK only. If you have any problems, call the helpline on 0171-412 3795.

THE TIMES FANTASY FORMULA ONE ENTRY FORM

Complete this form with your credit-card details, or enclose a sterling cheque for £3 payable to Fantasy Formula One. For readers resident outside the UK or RoI the fee is £15. Post it to: The Times Fantasy Formula One, Abacus House, Dudley Street, Luton LU1 1ZZ. Your entry must be received by first post on Wednesday, April 22, 1998 to qualify for the San Marino Grand Prix.

GROUP A AND GROUP B DRIVERS

1st	2nd	3rd

GROUP C AND GROUP D CONSTRUCTORS

1st	2nd	3rd

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____ Initials _____ Age _____
Surname _____
Address _____
Postcode _____ Day tel _____
Credit Card Payment Card number: _____
Expiry date _____ MasterCard _____ Visa _____
Name on card _____
Supply address of registered cardholder on a separate sheet of paper if different from that above
Signature _____ Date _____

I have read and accept the rules and wish to enter the Fantasy Formula One game.

1. On which days do you usually buy The Times?
Monday Tuesday Wednesday
Thursday Friday Saturday
Don't usually buy The Times

2. Which other National Daily Newspaper(s) do you buy at least once a week?

3. Which National Sunday Newspaper(s) do you buy almost always (3-4 copies per month)?

4. Which National Sunday Newspaper(s) do you buy quite often (1-2 copies per month)?

If you would prefer not to receive information and offers from organisations carefully selected by The Times, please tick TT

CHANGING TIMES

Eve-Ann Prentice tells how she finally overcame a deep-seated phobia caused by a childhood trauma

Learning to be a pilot beat my fear of flying



Eve-Ann Prentice carries out pre-flight checks on the ground, left, before climbing into the cockpit of her light aircraft. "What helped me was understanding why powered aircraft do not drop from the sky when the engine fails"



She was in a shocking state. A couple of large whiskies and travel sickness pills had done nothing to quell this tourist's terror of flying and when the holiday charter jet landed in Portugal, her relief was so overwhelming that the booze and pills combined with euphoria to turn her into a burbling idiot.

At a safe distance in time and space, a newly qualified pilot was preparing to land at an airfield in Bedfordshire, glancing at engine instruments, lowering flaps and lining up the aircraft with the runway. In a flight-bag stowed behind a seat were the log book and paperwork to prove that the pilot had passed exams to apply for a Private Pilot's Licence (PPL).

Impossible, though it sounds, the shambolic, phobic tourist was me a few years ago. The newly fledged pilot was a different person, but still me, proof that facing a fear head-on can crush it and that anyone can learn to fly if they want to.

What helped most was an understanding of the principles of flight — and of why powered aircraft do not drop out of the sky if an engine fails — they glide. In fact they glide so smoothly that there is barely any difference in sensation between gliding and a normal powered approach to land. Even a jumbo jet will glide, the only problem being that, unless it has a runway of international length, it is likely to bump into something before coming to a standstill.

When you start learning to fly, you marvel at what you believe to be a few fanatics who seem to spend all their spare time and money on aviation books, gadgets and clothes — until the day dawns when you realise that you have joined their ranks.

The nuns who ran the convent in North Wales where

I was a pupil sowed the seeds of dread when I was 12 years old. My father, then a newly qualified pilot, hired an aircraft to pick me up near the school to take me home to Cambridge for the summer holidays. As the nuns drove to the airfield, they chanted prayers for my safe deliverance from the flames of Hell which would engulf me should the aircraft plummet to earth.

The idea of crashing had never entered my head — until then. But the idea was nurtured when my father and the pilot keeping him company declared that my huge trunk was a trifle heavy for the single-engine aircraft.

An hour or so later the engine spluttered alarmingly as we neared Cambridge. I watched in nightmare mode as the propeller slowed, the engine sounds ceased, and I tried to scream — but no sound came out. The second pilot had decided to run one fuel tank dry to try to make the most of the fuel.

Any flying instructor would be horrified today, since any gunge at the bottom of the tank could be sucked into the engine. As it happened, the engine coughed back to life seconds later as fuel was



sucked from the second tank. For me the episode was a near calamity. In the next 15 years I avoided going near any aircraft and my phobia grew fat on ignorance.

Unfortunately, the phobia dashed with a craving for travel. So, when work-funded opportunities for travel to Australia and the Far East came up, I tried everything from hypnosis to drink and (legal) drugs to overcome the problem of knowing that I would die if I travelled by air.

The cavalry turned up in the form of the Oxford Air Training School, which trains pilots for airlines, including BA, British Midland and Kuwait Airlines. Two instructors there, Joe Sharp and Brian

Hampson, displayed a patience bordering on saintliness. As I became more obsessed with flying, I began hanging around Skyline, a small flying school at Little Gransden, Bedfordshire, where I was coaxed into releasing my grip on terra firma.

One of the most important lessons is how to fly straight and level. When you start to learn, flying seems to require the skills needed in swimming, cycling, driving a car and using a CB radio all at the same time. Just when you have the straight bit right, you find you have risen 500 feet without noticing.

The next revelation is that, as might be suspected, learning to land can be tricky. The knack lies broadly in aiming for the end of the runway at a constant angle, pulling the nose up to fly level, then effectively stalling the aircraft so that it sinks to the ground. It is only when you can do three good landings consecutively that you are allowed to go solo.

They never tell you this, so it comes as a metaphorical punch in the solar plexus when the instructor clambers out after seemingly endless thrashes round the circuit and sends you aloft alone. You will probably execute the most perfect take off, circuit and landing you are destined to make for many a year.

Navigation comes next, and at first it seems diabolically difficult finding your way without signposts above the endless carpet of squares and oblongs of an agricultural landscape. Until you get the hang of how to do simple calculations about wind drift, time and distance, handle the radio, carry out regular checks on the health of the aircraft, begin to make sense of a world without road signs, fill in a flight log and fly the plane — all at the same time — the exercise seems bewilderingly

complex. My first venture away from the comforting sight of Kidlington airfield ended in deep embarrassment — and within 50 feet of a monumental bill from the RAF. After pootling a few miles east, I was turning back to Kidlington when I noticed a Hercules military aircraft heading towards me at a similar height and I knew that, according to the laws of that air, I must give way. I climbed and circled, but was so fixated by the sight of this huge and stately aircraft that I committed the cardinal mistake of forgetting to keep an eye on the ground.

By the time the Hercules was disappearing from view, a gusty wind had blown me so far south that, where I had been over serene fields near the village of Brill, I was now over a large town. Which large town? I really hadn't a clue, but hoped that it might be Oxford. Then, joy of joys, I spotted an airfield next to a motorway — it had to be Kidlington. And I radioed that I had the field in sight.

Wrong. The airfield was RAF Benson and the reason for its deserted *Mary Celeste* appearance was that all military traffic had been cleared from the zone while they investigated my invasion. Thank God I realised in time and pulled away just 50 feet or so from a

touchdown that would have brought a bill for £1,000. It was a salutary lesson, but one which concentrated the mind wonderfully on the need to navigate correctly.

You are also taught to practise what to do in the unlikely event of an engine failure — basically find a field (you are not allowed as a basic PPL to fly over built-up areas unless you can glide clear if the engine conks out); how to recover from a stall (far easier and less traumatic than it sounds), and how to fly by instruments if you find yourself unable to see the ground in bad weather.

In fact, many lessons are abandoned at the last minute because it is too cloudy, too

windy, too hazy or even too hot. Aircraft engines cannot develop the same power on a hot and humid day as they can on a cold one.

You quickly learn to appreciate an ironic flying adage: "If you've time to spare, go by air." Although the Piper Warrior I learnt to fly cruises at about 103 knots, the time taken to check weather, prepare a flight log, check the plane and gather all the gear you need means that many typical flights in England take longer than they would by car.

The first thing most newly qualified PPLs want to do is to take a friend flying. My first passenger will be my father — I just wish I could find a nun to be my second.

HOW TO GET A LICENCE

- To gain a private pilot's licence you need a medical certificate, at least 43 hours' tuition and to pass written multiple-choice exams in air law, human performance (which includes medical matters and how not to fool yourself into thinking all is well when it's not), meteorology, navigation, the technical workings of aircraft and use of the radio. There are also three practical tests, two in navigation and one in general handling of the aeroplane. All this costs between £2,500 and £7,000, depending on how long you take and whether you learn at a big school such as the Oxford Air Training School, or a small club. Although 43 hours is the minimum requirement, many people take a good deal longer. My grand total was 70 hours.

For further information: Oxford Air Training School (01865 844253); Skyline School of Flying (01767 651950).



Preparing a flight plan. "Navigating without signposts above a farming landscape seems diabolically difficult"

On the lead of the queen of diamonds, declarer stopped for a moment to consider. West was obviously marked with most of the outstanding high cards and the contract would be safe as long as East could be prevented from obtaining the lead to play through declarer's king of clubs. Even double-dummy the answer is not obvious but without any apparent thought Forquet found the answer: he ducked the queen of diamonds. He was not home yet but when a diamond was continued he knew how to finish the job.

He won the diamond, discarding a heart, and played a spade to his king. West took his ace and persisted with a third diamond on which declarer discarded a second

heart. After drawing a second round of trumps with the nine of spades, the ace of hearts was cashed. When West had to discard and could not ruff, it was finished. Pietro was able to ruff out East's queen of hearts and return to dummy with the queen of spades. The defenders could only take two aces and the diamond that declarer had so obligingly allowed them at trick one.

Learn from the Stars is now available in all good bookshops or direct from the publisher, BT Batsford, on 01376 321276, price £9.99 (plus £1 p&p).

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

- By Philip Howard BABICHE a. An endearment, "babe" b. A freshwater fish c. A rawhide thong FABURDEN a. A knapsack b. An indentured serf c. Counterpoint GIGERUIM a. A spice b. Entrails c. A dancehall APAREJO a. A Mexican tuxedo b. A saddle c. A ghost

Answers on page 45

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Junior Success

For the first time a group of British junior players has taken part in the annual tournament for talented juniors in Frydeck-Mistek, in the Czech Republic. This event, now in its 19th year, attracts some of the strongest players in Eastern Europe and this year 12 countries were represented.

In the Boys Under-14 section Lorin O'Costa of Royston, Herts scored 7.5/9 to finish sole winner in a field of 53. Meanwhile in the Boys Under-12 section, Thomas Rendle of Hastings led throughout, starting off with 7 straight wins and finishing with two draws to take clear first prize one point clear of the field. Thomas was also awarded the best game prize for the following win.

White: Thomas Rendle Black: D. Sozen Czech, 1998

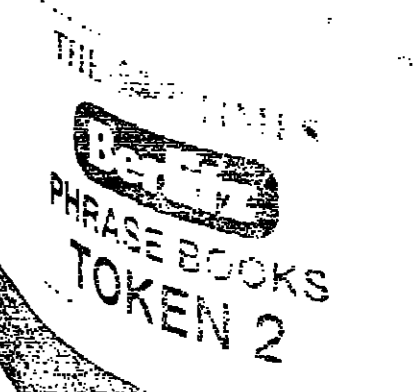
French Defence chess game analysis with move lists: 1 e4 e6, 2 d4 c5, 3 Nf3 Nc6, 4 c3 Nb6, 5 Nf3 Nb6, 6 Bb4+, 7 Qc2 Qd6, 8 Nc3 Nge7, 9 a3 Bxc3+, 10 Bxc3 Bc7, 11 O-O Re8, 12 Bc3 Nf6, 13 Rf1 Qc7, 14 Ng5 Nf6, 15 Qc3 Bb6, 16 Qf5 Nf8, 17 B4 g6, 18 Ba3 Qc7, 19 Ch3 Qc7, 20 f4 Nc4, 21 Bxb8 Kxb8, 22 Bxg6 b6, 23 Nxb6+, 24 g5 Kc4, 25 Nc5 c7, 26 B6 Bb8, 27 Rxb7 Black resigns

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Atalik - Salaeu, Cappelle la Grande 1998. The key to this position is the domination of the e-file by White's major pieces. How did he quickly convert this advantage into victory?

Solution on page 45



SPEEDWAY

Russians reel from maximum impact

By TONY HOARE

DAVID HOWE celebrated becoming England's youngest international by scoring a maximum 12 points at Stoke on Saturday. Howe, who broke a record that had stood since 1969, raced to four consecutive wins as Britain's under-21 team beat the full Russian side 67-23.

England's juniors were a class above the Russian visitors, who also lost heavily in a match at Peterborough the previous night.

While Howe, 16, was unbeaten in four rides, England's top scorer was Lee Richardson, who amassed 11 and three bonus points, which were earned for following home a rider from his own team.

The only Russian to make an impact was Roman Povozhny, a world under-21 finalist, whose 12 points included two victories over Scott Nicholls.

In contrast to the performance of Howe, thought to be the youngest international in world speedway, Mikhail Starostin, almost certainly the oldest at 43 years old, failed to score a point from his four rides.

Howe, who only turned professional at the beginning of this season, was delighted to have made such an early impact.

"I was a bit nervous before the start, but I was starting well and I just can't believe I got a maximum," he said. "It has been a brilliant start to the season and my career, and this has just capped it."

The comfortable margin of victory will boost the English youngsters as they prepare for the second match, which takes place at Exeter tonight. The Russians have been popular visitors to Devon in the past and the steeply-banked County Ground track is expected to suit their style.

Richardson switches to the No 1 position for the match tonight, while the joint England team managers, Graham Reeve and John Davis, draft in Paul Oughton. Paul Clews and Lee Dicken.

Paul Thorp, the Hull rider, was unbeaten in his six rides in the Premier League, the sport's lower division, at Berwick on Saturday and also knocked almost half a second off the old track record at Sheffield Park.

Derbyshire hold off Yorkshire on countback in schools final

Tarry experiences pressures of the team game

By JOHN GOODBODY



SPORT IN SCHOOLS

FOR an individual sport such as badminton, the added responsibility of a team event can be a tense experience.

Leah Tarry, the England under-19 international from Derby, admitted that she was expected to be a "banker winner" in the inter-counties schools final against Yorkshire at Nottingham University yesterday.

Tarry had played her opponent, Julie Pike, four times previously and never lost. But she was upset yesterday 21-15 and the defeat gave Yorkshire a 3-1 lead in the ten-rubber final of four singles, four doubles and two mixed doubles.

Tarry, from Littleover School, said: "I don't know why it happened. The easy answer is that she played really well and I played badly. In an event like this the responsibility of the team is on you. I felt really bad. However, if you get down then the team gets down with you — and I had still to play in the doubles."

The tension was affecting both teams. Kristian Roebuck, another international from Derby, said: "It's nerve-racking. Your mouth goes quite dry."

Derbyshire battled back with Tarry and Elaine Faye winning their doubles 21-16 against Rachel Aiston and Katie Wright.

The success was a relief for Tarry and Derby who finally were able to level the scores at 5-5 but won the trophy on a points countback by 170-164. It was their first victory in the 33 years of the tournament.

With 33 counties taking part, Leinster defeated Warwick 6-4 to take third place. Hertfordshire, the defend-

her school for trips. She said: "My movement on court is the weakest part of my game but I like a fast pace and particularly like smashing the shuttlecock."

According to Eric Brown, the chairman of the English Schools Badminton Association (ESBA), it is the fitness and speed of the youngsters that has improved over the years. He said: "Technique has also changed with the introduction 20 years ago of metal rather than wooden rackets. They also have the advantage in allowing youngsters to play even more cheaply because wooden rackets used to break."

Badminton is not an expensive sport since there are no elaborate facilities and, as Brown said: "You can get a reasonable amount of enjoyment very shortly after taking it up."

The problem for the sport is a shortage of qualified coaches in schools. Keith Robbins, another ESBA official, said:

"Many of the top players have moved away from the schools to take part in the sport and their attitude is geared to a more professional approach. Some counties, such as Yorkshire, still do have genuine schools badminton whereas in other counties the school-age sport is developed in local area groups. It does not matter where it takes place so long as it does."

Final positions in the inter-counties tournament were: 1. Derbyshire. 2. Yorkshire. 3. Leinster. 4. Warwickshire. 5. Surrey. 6. Hertfordshire. 7. Essex. 8. Greater Manchester. 9. Hampshire. 10. Leicestershire.

'I felt really bad — but if you get down then the team gets down with you and I had to play again'



Tarry prepares to return a shot from Pike during her surprise defeat in the inter-counties schools tournament final in Nottingham yesterday

BOWLS

Greenslade leads mixed band of qualifiers

By DAVID RAYNS JONES

THREE Englishmen, two Welshmen and an Irishman qualified from the Professional Bowlers Association play-offs in Blackpool yesterday, and will compete in the televised International Open at Potters Leisure Resort on the Norfolk coast in October.

From an interestingly diverse 140-person field that included seven women, a 12-year-old schoolboy, a sprightly octogenarian and a man in a wheelchair, only the serious contenders survived until the final day, when competition was intense.

Jason Greenslade, 28, a Cardiff civil servant, who impressed in the world championship in January, when he pushed the eventual champion, Paul Foster, all the way in the quarter-finals, booked an early return to the portable rink by beating Kevin Stephens, 21, a butcher from Llandrindod Wells, after failing to score in the first set.

He is joined by Nigel Williams, 40, from Swansea, who qualified by last year's Open, and made his mark by beating Mark McMahon, the Hong Kong international, in the first round at Preston. Williams beat Noel Burrows, a former Waterloo winner from the crown green code, 7-4, 7-4, yesterday.

Eddie Henry, a retired civil servant from Stanley, who, at 52, is older than most of today's leading exponents, defeated Kenneth Johnstone, of Scotland, 7-5, 7-2, and David Holt, the 31-year-old manager of the Blackpool Borough stadium, chalked up a straight-sets victory over Billy Jackson, from Lincoln. Trevor Taylor, a 21-year-old Cumbrian, beat Alex Marshall, a former world indoor and outdoor pairs champion, 7-5, 7-3.

On his last appearance on the portable rink six years ago, Holt was on the brink of victory over Ian Schuback in the quarter-finals of the world championship, but failed to draw the winning shot and saw the Australian go on to win the title. Older and wiser, he is hoping to take his chances this time around.

Neil Booth, 30, another civil servant and the lone Irishman, from County Antrim, kept out Scotland's last hope, Kevin Rice, 7-0, 7-5.

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Capitalisation, week's change

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Table of equity prices for various sectors including Alcoholic Beverages, Banks, Breweries, Pubs & Rest, Building Materials, Chemicals, Construction, Diverse Industrials, Engineering, Insurance, Investment Trusts, Leisure & Hotels, Media, Mining, Pharmaceuticals, Printing & Paper, Property, Retailers, Food, Retailers, General, Support Services, and Transport. Includes columns for company name, price, and change.

Main table of equity prices for various sectors including Alcoholic Beverages, Banks, Breweries, Pubs & Rest, Building Materials, Chemicals, Construction, Diverse Industrials, Engineering, Insurance, Investment Trusts, Leisure & Hotels, Media, Mining, Pharmaceuticals, Printing & Paper, Property, Retailers, Food, Retailers, General, Support Services, and Transport. Includes columns for company name, price, and change.

Table of equity prices for various sectors including Alcoholic Beverages, Banks, Breweries, Pubs & Rest, Building Materials, Chemicals, Construction, Diverse Industrials, Engineering, Insurance, Investment Trusts, Leisure & Hotels, Media, Mining, Pharmaceuticals, Printing & Paper, Property, Retailers, Food, Retailers, General, Support Services, and Transport. Includes columns for company name, price, and change.

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كوزا من الاصل

THE FACTS

Turnover: £1.87 billion
Pre-tax profit: £51 million
Employees: 5,500
Brands: Nuclear Electric, Scottish Nuclear
Businesses: Modern nuclear generating plant, including Sizewell B in Suffolk, the UK's first single pressurised water reactor (SWR) station. Two advanced gas-cooled reactors (AGRs) stations include Hinkley Point B near Bridgwater, Somerset, and Dungeness B on the Kent coast.

THE BOARD

British Energy's chairman is John Robb, a Scotsman and staunch supporter of the Conservative Party. Chairman of Wellcome before its takeover by Glaxo, Mr Robb, 62 next week, began his career at Heinz, in a marketing role, and was later managing director of Beecham. He is a non-executive director of Allied Domecq and Unigate and chairman of Logitron. He is also deputy chairman of the Horse Race Betting Levy Board. Peter Hollins, 50, joined as chief executive in February from European Vinyls Corporation, a joint venture between ICI and Enichem of Italy. Previously he had spent 19 years at ICI. Sir Noel Davies, 64, non-executive deputy chairman, was chief executive of VSEL until 1995 when he became partner chairman of Nuclear Electric. He is chairman of Powell Duffryn. Robin Jeffrey, 59, deputy chairman, was made chairman of Scottish Nuclear in 1993. A visiting professor in electrical power engineering at Strathclyde University, he is a non-executive director of London Transport and London Underground. Peter Wray, chief executive of Nuclear Electric, is a non-executive director of PTS Group and industrial professor at the University of Warwick. Non-executives include Sir Robin Biggam, chairman of the Independent Television Commission and Fairsy Group, and a non-executive director of British Aerospace, Redland and Foreign & Colonial German Investment Trust. John Bullock, previously on the board of the UK Atomic Energy Authority, is a non-executive at Kingfisher and More Group, while Peter Stevenson is chairman of Mackays Stores. Julia Walsh, former chief executive of ADAS, is chairman of AVL Holdings and a non-executive director of Southalls and David A Hall.

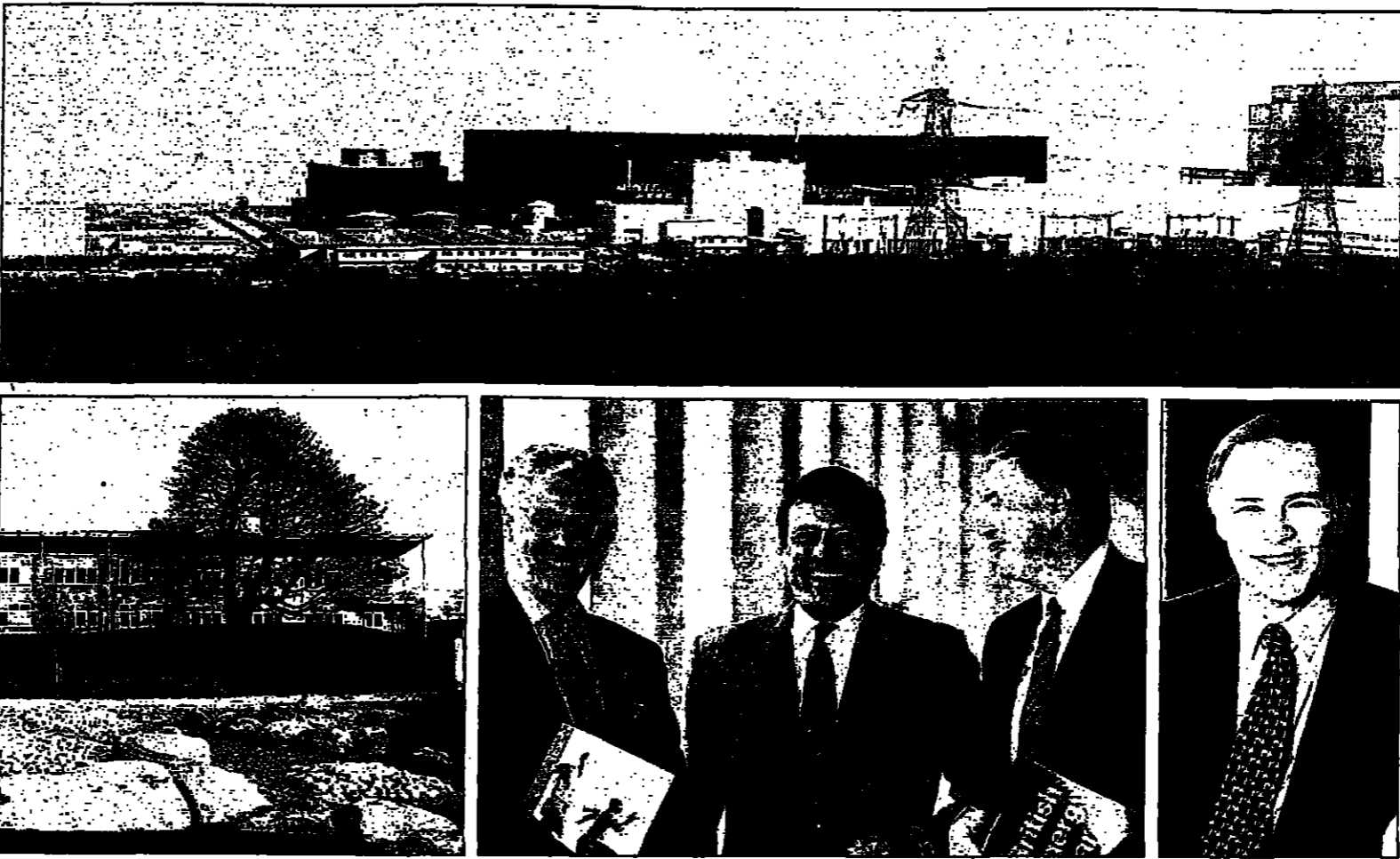
I was never going to be easy to sell nuclear power. As it turned out, the flotation of British Energy was little short of a disaster.

British Energy was a privatisation that, two years ago, the Conservative Government was desperate to push through before a general election. Labour was equally keen to go on the attack, condemning the sale of the more modern of the State's nuclear generating fleet as a privatisation too far. Inevitably, alarm bells rang for some over safety. Opponents of the sale feared that a commercial company could be tempted to compromise as it moved to cut jobs and costs.

However, private investors were lured to British Energy, enticed by high-profile advertising and by memories of big profits made after the privatisation of the other electricity companies. They went on to make up more than half of the company's shareholders. Institutions were also ready to jump aboard, persuaded by the prospectus's promise of strong generation of cash, as well as of electricity.

That prospectus, however, needed a spot of re-writing. John Battle, now Energy Minister but then Shadow spokesman, put a spanner in the works by saying that a Labour Government could end nuclear's privileged status in the power market, which lets it generate electricity constantly. The campaign shattered just after the deadline for private investors to make share applications. Cracks were found in sections of two of the reactors, prompting immediate closure and highlighting how vulnerable to technical factors was a company with only eight reactors. Tim Eggar, the Energy Minister who had pushed on with flotation relentlessly, refused to halt the sale to let cold-footed Sids bale out, saying that the fact that closures had been made was a matter of pride and highlighted safety consciousness.

CORPORATE PROFILE: British Energy



British Energy's flagship Sizewell B reactor, top, and the company's head office in Edinburgh: Robert Hawley, left, British Energy's former chief executive, with Tim Eggar, centre, the former Energy Minister, and John Robb, chairman; and Peter Hollins, the new chief executive

down from original broker estimates by directors who said that they were concerned that it had been overvalued. The amount of debt taken into the private sector was also cut after horse-trading between the company and the Government. However, Mr Robb insists that the best was done by the taxpayer and expects a soon-to-be published National Audit Office report to vindicate the price and the handling of the sale.

Another shock was to come. Investors were hit by losses when trading in British Energy shares opened and it became the first privatisation since BP, in 1987, to slump to a discount. BZW, broker to the company, had to weigh into the market to try to stabilise the shares. After such a start to commercial life, things could only get better.

As things stand now, it is hard to think of British Energy as the same business. It has become the country's biggest generator, knocking National Power into second place. It has repaid all its debt, far earlier than expected, and it is trying to expand overseas. It has also begun diversifying into gas-fired generation on a modest scale in the UK. The shares have romped ahead.

Mr Robb believes that British Energy has undergone a transformation that is matched by public perception of it. He says that although potential executives once hesitated to join a producer of nuclear electricity, the company is now viewed like any other. "The nuclear word has almost disappeared when people talk of British Energy," he said. "Nuclear now has been normalised."

Mr Robb had two main credentials for becoming chairman. As the former chairman and chief executive of the Wellcome Trust, before Glaxo took it over, he had experience of raising big sums of money. He is also a Scot, and the Government was keen to promote the Scottish element of the business after Scottish Office worry over jobs. The business, which consists of English Nuclear Electric and Scottish Nuclear, is headquartered in Edinburgh.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

"British Energy has performed very well in terms of share price since its flotation. It is highly cash generative and the City will be looking for some form of payback, but the company also has to look overseas and to diversify in the UK. As an investment it is risky because it is vulnerable to the pool price, and because it has just eight stations it is exposed if something goes wrong at one of them." Nigel Hawkins, *Williams de Bro*

"British Energy's flotation valuation suffered the full brunt of Labour negativity, being the last utility privatisation under the Tories — and doubly so as it was nuclear. It is a complex stock, but as time progresses it is becoming better understood. Reactor life extensions are gradually becoming accepted as a probability — not just a possibility — by investors, but their impact on valuations is still underestimated." Angelos Anastasiou, *Credit Lyonnais Leasing*

expected to be much more scope for staff reductions. By the time British Energy issues full-year results in a few weeks, it will say that debt has been eliminated. A return to investors or a big expansion plan is awaited by the City. Mr Hollins is cautious, maintaining that the company is still weighing up all options. Investors would like to see substantial buying overseas, but the new chief executive says that the company will not rush into acquisitions. It has walked away from a couple of big deals.

British Energy has had a good run since its shaky privatisation, but it will be all too aware that circumstances have been kind. The price of electricity — over which it has no control — has been higher than expected and there have been no significant problems at reactors. Only one needs to have difficulties to deal a hefty blow to output. And without substantial diversification, problems at a reactor could unnervingly investors, as a flotation.

Based on the financial year to March 31 1997 — the latest figures available — British Energy can hardly be accused of corporate excess. Dr Hawley was paid £390,000, including a privatisation bonus — exactly in line with the model used by Crisp Consulting. Four non-executive directors were paid slightly below the norm. A fifth, Sir Noel Davies, earned £101,000. Crisp sees this as reasonable in the transition to the private sector.

On ethical expression, Integrity Works finds that British Energy takes considerable pains to ensure that its values are understood. However, best practice demands clear articulation of monitoring arrangements to ensure that any gap between rhetoric and conduct is addressed.

CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

OUR VERDICT

Ethical expression	6/10
Fat-cat quotient	9/10
Financial record	7/10
Share performance	9/10
Attitude to employees	7/10
Strength of brand	6/10
Innovation	6/10
Annual report	9/10
City star rating	7/10
Future prospects	7/10
Total	73/100

Ethical expression is evaluated by Integrity Works. The fat-cat quotient, in which best boardroom pay practice scores highest, is provided by Crisp Consulting.

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Are the hawks hunting right inflation target?



ROGER BOOTLE

but the rate was lower than that for Denmark, Spain, Italy, The Netherlands, Finland and Sweden. If the Government's inflation target had been expressed in terms of the harmonised index...

Which index is right? There is no single "correct" measure of inflation. The HICP excludes the cost of owner-occupied housing and the occupied housing and the cost of owner-occupied housing...

and energy on trying to hit the target, with possibly huge consequences for people's livelihoods and the prosperity of the whole country if it gets the judgment wrong...

Confidential toy-boy story



Widow Zypora Frank (C4, 9.00pm)

Family Confidential Channel 5, 8.00pm Normas and Chris met at Butlin's and fell so passionately in love that she left her husband of 27 years to live with him...

Witness: Owning Auschwitz Channel 4, 9.00pm Zypora Frank, a 62-year-old Jewish widow long domiciled in Israel, returns to her native Poland on a mission charged with irony...

Stressed Eric BBC2, 10.00pm Here is a British animated comedy in the genre of The Simpsons or King of the Hill...

two truculent kids, one dim and the other allergic to everything around her. He does a menial paper-shuffling job and is bullied by his boss...

The Trial of Enoch Powell Channel 4, 10.55pm Thirty years ago to the day Enoch Powell made his "rivers of blood" speech giving warning of the dangers of immigration...

City rings changes to junk old image of the high-yield bond

Richard Miles views a market that has tripped up many an investor



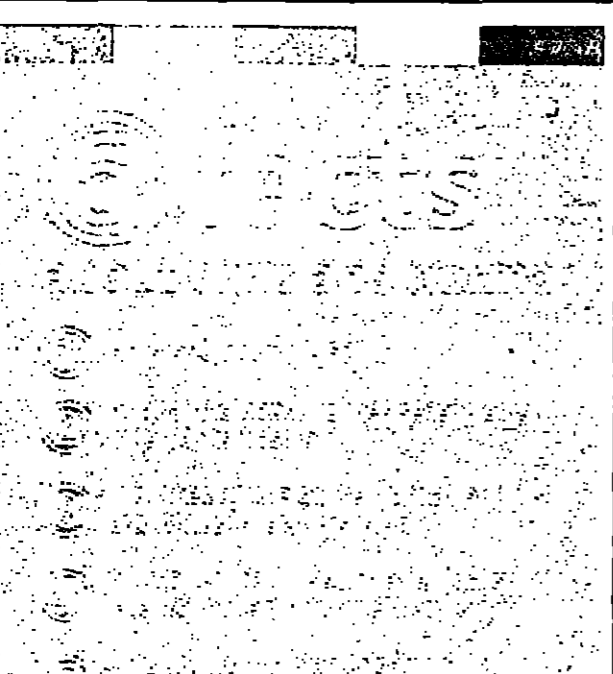
David Bowie is part of a move towards junk bonds funded by artists' back catalogues

Back in the early 1980s, the Government was so disturbed by adverse publicity surrounding the nuclear plant at Windscale that it renamed the site Sellafield...

chequered history, junk — sorry, high-yield — bonds have never gone away in the US and are now undergoing something of a resurgence in Europe...

leverage a buyout are turning to the high-yield market. Even ageing rockers, led by David Bowie, have been lured into issuing junk bonds...

Nabisco, the US tobacco and foods group. Venture capitalists such as KKR like junk bonds because they can pay over the odds for a company using very little of their own equity...



"The real breakthrough is that local currency bonds are beginning to emerge," says Mr Atterbury at CSFB. "We recently did a deal involving Fresenius, a German healthcare company, which was simultaneously priced in dollars and marks..."

It did not do so immediately, but there are now signs of increased interest. Nomura is reported to be looking at junk bonds to help to finance its £700 million acquisition of William Hill...

Once the economic cycle turns, the chances of default rise

finance at Credit Suisse First Boston, says that high-yield market issues for European companies totalled \$5.5 billion (£3.25 billion) in 1997...

Private investors should certainly steer clear of the market unless they intend to carry out a detailed analysis of bond issuers' future earnings...

FAMILY CONFIDENTIAL PEOPLE THE TIMES BOOKSHOP NEW TIMES CROSSWORD TITLES NOW AVAILABLE

RADIO CHOICE

Jools Holland Radio 2, 8.30pm A weekly music show whose opening words describe it best: "Good evening ladies and gentlemen, my name is Jools Holland and I have been on the BBC since 1962..."

Out With The Dog Radio 4, 3.30pm The new Radio 4 schedule has produced some varied and interesting afternoon slots and this new five-part, 15-minute series promises to be another success...

RADIO 1

6.30am Chris Moyles 12.00 Jo Whiteley Includes 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Dave Pearce 6.30 Steve Lamacq...

WORLD SERVICE

7.00am News 7.15 Beyond the Millennium 7.30 Omnibus 8.00 News 8.15 Off the Shelf 8.30 The Vintage Chart Show 9.00 News...

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Jimmy Young 1.30pm Debbie Throver 3.00 Ed Stewart...

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Breakfast with Betsy, Nick Basky presents music to start the morning 8.00 Harry Kelly includes Record of the Week...

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast Programme 9.00 Nolly Campbell 12.00 Midday 2.00pm Ruzic on Five 4.00 Nationwide 7.00 News Extra...

VIRGIN RADIO

7.00pm Chris Evans 10.00 Russ Williams 1.00pm Paul Coyte 4.00 Robin Banks 7.30 Ray Coles 10.00 Mark Forrest 2.00am Calum Jones 5.00 Jeremy Clark

RADIO 3

4.45 Music Machine, with Tomrory Pearson 5.00 In Tune, Humphrey Carpenter explores the history of Gramophone magazine...

TALK RADIO

6.30pm Kirsty Young with Bill Overton 9.00 Scott Chisholm 10.00 Lorraine Kelly 9.00pm Tommy Boyd 4.00 Peter Dinkley 7.00 Anna Rastburn 9.00 James White 1.00am Ian Collins 5.00 The Early Show

RADIO 4

6.00am On Air, with Patric Teasdale, includes Vivid (Cello Concerto in G); Glinka (Overture: Russian and Ludmila)...

RADIO 4

6.00 Six O'Clock News 6.30 The Best of I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue. The final programme of highlights with Humphrey (Vivienne), Barry Cryer, Brian and Geraldine...

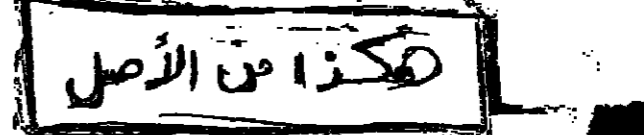
RADIO 5

6.00am Today, with Sue MacGregor and James Naughtie Includes 6.55, 8.55 Weather 7.25, 8.25 Sports News 7.45 Thought for the Day 9.00 Start the Week, with the Times columnist Mervyn Brinley and Geraldine...

RADIO 6

9.45 (FM) Serial: My Attain with Christianity. The first of five programmes in which Rabbi Leonel Blue reads from Isaiah his spiritual autobiography (1/5) 9.45 (LW) Daily Service 10.00 News: Woman's Hour, with Martha Kearney, includes Postcards: Spring Tide by Jonathan Holloway (1/5) 11.00 News: Going Underground. Gill Dunningham talks to five families moving in to new homes in Nottingham and are built underground 11.30 Evil Under the Sun. Michael Cawthra's dramatisation of the novel by Agatha Christie, with John Moffat and George Baker (3/5) 12.00 (LW) News Headlines: Shipping Forecast 12.00 (FM) News: You and Yours 12.57pm Weather 1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke 1.30 Mastermind. Peter Snow chairs heat three 2.00 News: The Archers (1) 2.15 Afternoon Play: Hermit Thrush at Morn, Natalia Popova's play based on the life of Amy Beach, the American composer, with Deborah Findlay, Henry Goodman, Carolyn Jones and William Roberts 3.00 News: Money Box Live: Call 0171-580 4444 Presented by Michael Duggdale 3.30 Out with the Dog, Sue Green 3.45 One Centimetre. The first of four contemporary Chinese short stories, written by Bi Shi Min, translated and read by Carolyn Choo 4.00 News: The Food Programme 4.30 Four Corners. Jane Fréchet and guests look behind the international headlines 5.00 PM, with Chris Lowe and Claire English 5.54 (LW) Shipping Forecast 5.57 Weather

FREQUENCY GUIDE RADIO 1, FM 87.8-89.8, RADIO 2, FM 88.0-90.2, RADIO 3, FM 90.2-92.4, RADIO 4, FM 92.4-94.8, LW 196, MW 720, RADIO 5 LIVE, MW 650, 920, WORLD SERVICE, MW 648, LW 186 (12.45-5.55am), CLASSIC FM, FM 100-102, VIRGIN RADIO, FM 105.8, MW 1187, 1215, TALK RADIO, MW 1053, 1089, Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamee.



Too slavish attention paid to point-making

Bank of Double History, did you? All right, you can copy my notes if you lead me.

enjoyable drama from time to time. But every single event was a vehicle for an historical point.

thought-provoking. And there was some lively period detail such as the reference to "the learned spianel at St James's Fair".



REVIEW Paul Hoggart

stretch, and embarrassment loomed. And embarrassment duly arrived, but mixed in with so much other bizarre, quirky and touching material that it didn't really matter.

It was worrying to discover that there are so many grown-ups who still put on Bluebellie voices, including Elton John and Harry Secombe.

preceded the defence of Rorke's Drift, and he has his sabre. He saw General Alexander drunk, falling down the stairs of an officer's mess in Italy.

BBC1 6.00am Business Breakfast (68827) 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (61339) 9.00 Change Threat (9708204)

10.00 Panorama: Health - the Trust Betrayed Investigation into cases of fraud by doctors and opticians within the NHS (1) (784117)

BBC2 6.10am English Only In America? (8373907) 6.35 A School for Our Times (6882372) 7.00 Teletubbies (1) (2782643) 7.25 The Kwicky Koala Show (1) (2781778)

10.00 The Simpsons (1) (978575) 6.25 Battleground Galatica A Cydon ship crashes near New York (1) (9819575)

HTV 6.00am GMTV (1277881) 9.25 This Morning (1) (9079865) 9.30 Vanessa (1) (5228911)

9.00 Peak Practice: Once in a Lifetime As Cardale prepares for the wedding of Andrew and Erica there is a health scare at an old people's home (1) (8643)

WESTCOUNTRY As HTV West except: 1.00pm A Country Practice (59594) 1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (5224020)

ANGEL As HTV West except: 12.15pm Westcountry News (6538440) 12.27-12.30 Illuminations (2352310) 1.00 High Road (56594)

MERIDIAN As HTV West except: 12.15pm Meridian News (6538440) 12.27-12.30 Meridian News (6538440) 1.00 High Road (56594)

ANGEL As HTV West except: 12.15pm Meridian News (6538440) 12.27-12.30 Meridian News (6538440)

11.00 Australia Wild (1) (6136) 11.30 Here's One I Made Earlier. Fennel, melon and bean salad; Navarin de saumon (1) (7) (8665) 12.00 Sesame Street (1) (57575)

11.00 Here's One I Made Earlier (8665) 12.00pm Flight to Reply (57575) 12.30 Sesame Street (83488) 1.00 Slot Melthrin (8392643)

CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra Satellite.

8.00 Family Confidential (1/8) A documentary series looking at the underbelly of life in Britain, which begins with a couple bridging a 32-year age gap (1) (5885372)

For further listings see Saturday's Vision: SKY 1 7.00am Street Sense (7999) 7.30 Gormies (1932) (1932) 7.45 The Simpsons (1984)

SKY MOVIES SCREEN 1 8.00am Through the Olive Trees (1184) (2202689) 8.30am The Long Walk Home (1184) (2202689) 9.00am The Long Walk Home (1184) (2202689)

SKY MOVIES SCREEN 1 Judge Steps Out (1989) (1181) 8.00 A Pig's Life (1985) (1039) 8.30 The Simpsons (1984)

SKY MOVIES SCREEN 2 5.00am A Pig's Life (1985) (34259251) 5.30am The Simpsons (1984) (34259251) 6.00am The Simpsons (1984) (34259251)

SKY SPORTS 12.00 Ten-Pin Bowling World Masters (8145568) 1.00pm European PGA Golf: Charles Oman (784775) 3.30 The Simpsons (1984)

SKY SPORTS 2 7.00am Spanish Football (1828) 8.00m Racing News (8730) 8.30m Aerobics (81931) 9.00m Motorsport (8287) 9.30m Football (8287)



Nicolas Cage in Leaving Las Vegas (Sky Screen 2, 10pm)

King (260643) 8.00 Coronation St (18833) 9.30 Wheelappers and Shunters (18833) 10.00 The Simpsons (1984) 11.00 The Simpsons (1984)

CHALLENGE TV 5.00pm Crossroads 5.45 Family Fortunes (1171) 6.00 Quiz (1171) 6.30 Quiz (1171) 7.00 Quiz (1171)

CHALLENGE TV 5.00pm Crossroads 5.45 Family Fortunes (1171) 6.00 Quiz (1171) 6.30 Quiz (1171) 7.00 Quiz (1171)

NICKELDEON 8.00am Count Duckula 8.30 Gormy 7.00 Caroline in the City (7.00) 7.30 Rugrats 8.00 Doug 8.30 Arthur 9.00 CBC 10.00 Wimpy's House 10.30 Babar 11.00 The Magic School Bus 11.30 Rugrats 12.00 Rugrats 12.30m Blue's Clues 1.00 Blue's Clues

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL 8.00pm Quantum Leap (123588) 9.00 The Cape (123588) 10.00 Fall From Heaven (123588) 11.00 Fall From Heaven (123588) 12.00 Fall From Heaven (123588)

THE HISTORY CHANNEL 4.00pm The War in the East (974285) 5.00m The War in the East (974285) 6.00m The War in the East (974285)

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Has British Energy passed nuclear test?

BUSINESS

TARGET TEST 46

Roger Bootle gets the measure of inflation



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

MONDAY APRIL 20 1998

Angry UK investors demand answers from law firm after SEC steps in

British Biotech investigated by US watchdog

By PAUL DURMAN

THE two largest shareholders in British Biotech have demanded a full explanation of why the troubled drug development company is under investigation by the US Securities and Exchange Commission.

Perpetual and Mercury Asset Management, who between them own 20 per cent of British Biotech, have also asked Cameron McKenna, the law firm, to report on controversial shares sales made by directors shortly before the company announced serious problems with batimastat, which until 1995 was its lead cancer drug.



Miller: faces dismissal

Keith McCullagh, chief executive, and Sir Brian Richards, British Biotech's co-founder and former chairman, made £1.2 million selling shares just weeks before bad news on batimastat in January 1995.

The SEC inquiry, previously undisclosed in the UK, is revealed in a little-read US securities filing. The SEC began a formal investigation last July because of its concerns that some of British Biotech's press releases in 1995 and 1996 may have violated US securities laws.

quity is part of British Biotech's attempt to deal with shareholder concern in the wake of last month's suspension of Andy Millar, its widely-respected director of clinical research. Dr Millar, who until recently oversaw the trials of British Biotech's cancer and pancreatic drugs, will face a disciplinary hearing this morning that is thought likely to lead to his dismissal.

It emerged yesterday that it was Dr Millar's decision to discuss with Perpetual his concerns about British Biotech's commercial strategy that led to his suspension. Already worried about British Biotech, Perpetual's concerns were greatly increased by what it learned from Jane

Henderson, a Goldman Sachs who was discouraged from speaking to Dr Millar when she visited British Biotech's Oxford headquarters about two months ago.

So grave are Dr Millar's doubts about British Biotech's prospects for short-term success that last June he refused to take part in any further City briefings. It is understood he has since refused to accept phone calls from analysts who had previously sounded him out for information about the progress of clinical trials.

Margaret Riddan, Perpetual's head of European equities, and Neil Woodford, another senior fund manager, reject British Biotech's claim that Dr Millar was acting irresponsibly in speaking to them. Perpetual and, later, Mercury agreed to be made insiders - taking receipt of price sensitive information on the understanding that they could not deal in their shares. Royal Sun Alliance, which owns a 6 per cent stake, has also joined the action group pressing for change. Perpetual is thought to be seeking widespread management changes, starting with a replacement for Dr McCullagh.

Contrary to suggestions at the weekend, Dr Millar denies disclosing confidential information to analysts. British Biotech's so-called 20-F filing also reveals that the US Food and Drug Administration expressed concern about the company's account of its success with marimastat, its cancer drug, as long ago as September 1996. Although British Biotech insists it did not over-hype the drug, the FDA did not accept the company's response. British Biotech suspects the FDA's concerns may have led to the ongoing SEC investigation but does not believe it has damaged its reputation with the FDA's oncology division.



Keith McCullagh made a large profit selling shares just weeks before bad news on a Biotech drug back in 1995

Thomson flotation takes off

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

THOMSON Travel Group will today publish a prospectus that is expected to value the company at around £1.6 billion - 60 per cent more than original forecasts and 23 per cent higher than analysts' estimates just a month ago.

The unexpectedly strong demand from private investors for shares in the tour operator has prompted Thomson and its financial advisers to consider increasing the size of the stake earmarked for small shareholders from the 10 per cent level set a month ago. Thomson, currently owned by

Thomson Corporation of Canada, owns Lunn Poly, UK's largest travel agent, and Britannia, the UK's largest charter airline.

The group's advisers will today give a valuation range, with £1.6 billion expected to be the mid-point. They will also reveal the number of shares that will be in issue, giving investors an early indication of share prices.

Thomson Corporation of Canada, owns Lunn Poly, UK's largest travel agent, and Britannia, the UK's largest charter airline. The group's advisers will today give a valuation range, with £1.6 billion expected to be the mid-point. They will also reveal the number of shares that will be in issue, giving investors an early indication of share prices.

Crossword puzzle grid with clues and solutions.

No 1384

- ACROSS: 1 Marketing spide (5,5), 9 Out of date, died (7), 10 Politely refuse (5), 11 Cuckoo print type of lily (4), 12 Tape carton (8), 14 Intelligent, skilful (6), 15 Repartee (6), 18 Russian author of Fathers and Sons (8), 20 Fasten; a nuisance (4), 22 A thespian (5), 23 Gold bars (7), 24 Dentifrice (10), DOWN: 2 Well ventilated (4), 3 Cause to be loved (6), 4 Column base (8), 5 Entice (5), 6 Hard-nosed bargaining (5-7), 7 Willful, unmanageable (12), 8 Tree; oat (6), 13 Academic investigation (8), 16 In evening light (9), 17 Belgrade its capital (6), 19 Proportion (5), 21 Narrow incision (4)

- SOLUTION TO NO 1383: ACROSS: 1 Fling 7 On paper 8 Calibre 9 St Leger 11 Sawyer 13 Tax return 15 Privateer 19 Talent 21 Bayonet 23 Awkward 24 Adjourn 25 Enter DOWN: 1 Focus 2 In-laws 3 Gibbet 4 Does 5 Latent 6 Revelry 10 Target 12 Rattle 14 Orlando 16 Voodoo 17 Rankle 18 Repast 20 Tudor 22 Tank

- SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO EASTER MONDAY JUMBO: ACROSS: 1 Tessitura 6 Underdog 10 Historic 16 Roost 17 Dot the is and cross the Ts 18 Stainer 19 Copperplate 20 Amnesia 21 Melodramatically 23 Landscaped 26 Marguerite 28 Tear out 29 Aorta 32 Jimpale 33 Haystack 34 Unsurpassed 37 Evidentiary 39 Custer 41 Parsifal 42 Show-offs 43 Falter 44 Sapprophytes 46 Dehydration 48 Gainsaid 50 Usurer 52 Piece 53 Decanal 54 Grim Reaper 57 Lose ground 59 Autobiographical 62 Copious 64 Reapportion 66 Iccicles 67 Mene mene tekel upharis 68 Id est 69 Niceties 70 Close-set 71 Delegated DOWN: 1 Tiresome 2 Show a clean pair of heels 3 Intoned 4 Undertaken 5 Aftic 6 Unhappiness 7 Driveway 8 Realpolitik 9 Ordeal 11 It stands to reason 12 Titanic 13 Reeks 14 Cassandra 15 Freemasons 22 Ali Baba 24 Parts of it are excellent 25 Capulets 27 Golden oldie 29 Anaesthesia 30 Diseased 31 Mascot 35 Delusory 36 Stuff and nonsense 38 Yearning 40 Sordid 45 Pairing 47 Inclinate 48 Gallup polls 49 Significant 51 Irrational 52 Policeman 55 Corrupt 56 Closedst 58 Grommet 60 Hailing 61 Jackal 63 Pznic 65 Noosed

Argos seeks help from Schroders

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

FOUR of the most senior managers at Argos are meeting Schroders, the retailer's biggest shareholder, today in a final attempt to fend off the £1.9 billion takeover bid from Great Universal Stores.

GUS confirmed yesterday that it did not intend to raise its 65p per share offer but said it would decide at 5.30pm today whether it intended to take up the option of extending the offer period for another two days, until a week on Tuesday.

Schwab to deal on Internet

By CHRIS AYRES

BUDDING fund managers can forget about buying pinstripe suits and red braces and kit themselves out with a PC and an armchair.

Far East's woes imperil UK hope of 100,000 jobs

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY AND JANET BUSH

DIRECT investment from the Far East in Britain has virtually stopped, jeopardising the creation of up to 100,000 jobs over the next decade, according to preliminary results of a study into inward investment.

Melanie Lansbury, senior economist with Business Strategies, the forecasting group, said that 70,000 jobs could be lost in Wales and 30,000 in Scotland if her most pessimistic forecasts are borne out.

The warning comes after Asian economies have announced delays to big projects in the UK as they struggle with a collapsed home market and a saturated world market for some electronic products.

Advertisement for 'LOWEST COST LIFE INSURANCE' by direct life & pension services. Includes a table of rates for various companies and a call to action.

BBC taps talent of BT's media strategist

By RAYMOND SNODDY
MEDIA EDITOR

THE BBC will today announce that it has attracted Rupert Gavin, BT's multi-media guru, as chief executive of BBC Worldwide, its commercial arm.

The appointment is a considerable boost for the BBC and a loss for BT. Mr Gavin is an old Etonian with a career that has spanned advertising, marketing, writing lyrics for rock groups and theatrical production. He is independently wealthy from a management buyout of Sharps, an advertising agency later sold to Saatchi & Saatchi, and is thought to be taking the BBC job because of the undoubted challenge it offers.

Unlike his predecessor at BBC Worldwide, Bob Phillips now chief executive of the Guardian Media Group, Mr Gavin will not also be Deputy Director-General of the BBC. The Worldwide job is now seen as so big that it needs full-time attention. In addition to its existing commercial activities, the BBC now has a joint venture with Flextech, the cable and satellite channel company and has completed an international joint venture with Discovery Communications of the US. Under the deal, the two organisations will launch joint channels to be sold into world television markets.

Vertical sidebar containing various small advertisements and notices, including 'Secret' and '770140 04622'.